

# RAZZORCAKE

KNIVELIFERS  
AND THE SNIFFERS

STEVE  
IGNORANT  
OF CRASS  
NO LOVE  
one punk's  
GUIDE  
CO  
FREE JAZZ

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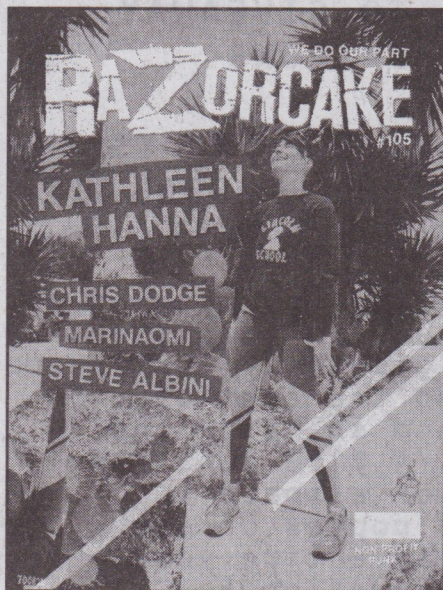
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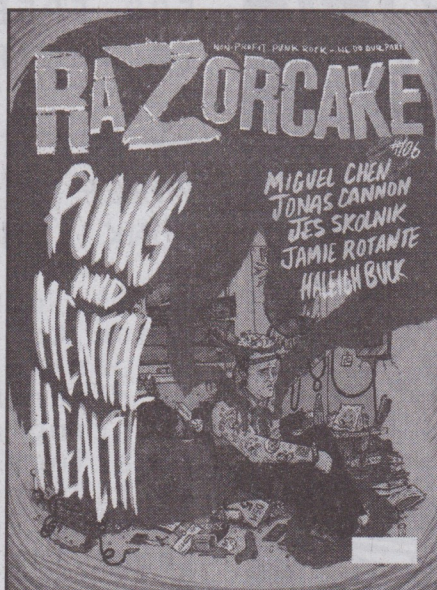
WHO WE  
ARE

**RAZORCAKE is** a magazine dedicated to DIY punk, independent culture, and amplifying unheard voices. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, we're sustained by subscriptions, donations, advertisements, and grants. All support is greatly appreciated. We feel when we work together, life is a little more bearable. On one side is a terrifying culture of manipulation, and on the other side are all of us.

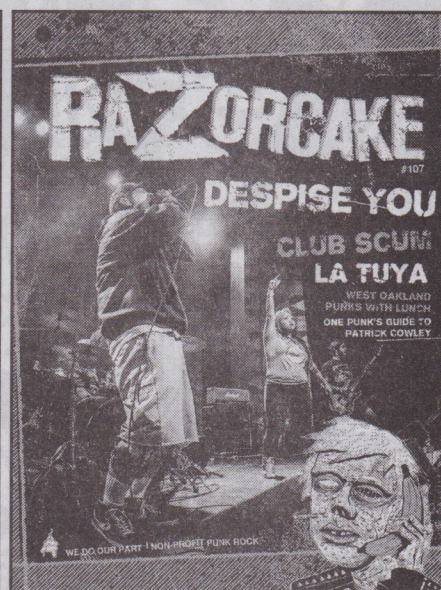
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#106, October / November 2018



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Anyone has the potential to be a Razorcake contributor. If you don't see or hear what you'd like covered, lend us a helping hand. If you're knowledgeable about DIY punk, are open to the editing of your work, can meet deadlines, and follow instructions, we'll consider your contribution. We have openings for interviews, articles, podcasts, photos, comics, web columns, videos, reviews, and editorial illustrations. All creative content is done on a volunteer basis.

Razorcake does not tolerate racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, or ableist bullshit—and we've held these ethics since our start in 2001. Diversity makes us a better punk organization. We're encouraging people who are marginalized—by gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and personal experience—to submit material to Razorcake. Let's work with each other.

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## The Best Defense

It's been said that the Comanches were the most powerful Indian tribe in American history. Native American bands removed books from settlers' houses before they set them alight during the war of Comancheria. They weren't interested in the contents of the Bible or *Frankenstein*. They stuffed the books inside their shields. The shields were made from the necks of buffalo, the toughest part of the animal they owed their livelihood and way of life to. Many a bluecoat and Texas Ranger double checked their weapons when their bullets were absorbed by the shield, leaving them exposed for a still-charging Quahadi to strike them down. The Plains Indians used the books as an effective defense against bullets.

During the Spanish Civil War, left-wing Republican troops in Madrid—the strategic key to Spain—stood fast against Franco's fascists. Their rallying cry, “¡No Pasarán!”—“they shall not pass”—lasted for nine-hundred days. Madrid was bombed regularly. Materials were scarce during the siege. The residents of Madrid dug out bomb shelters by hand after long days of work. People hid in cafés and bars when gunshots rang out. It was discovered that most bullets were stopped by books 350 pages and longer. Storefronts and houses stockpiled books in walls as a means of first defense.

A single issue of *Razorcake* is 112 pages. It's published six times a year. That's 672 pages thick. Fortunately, we at *Razorcake* aren't under physical attack and aren't padding our bunker with back issues. That's not to say there's nothing worth fighting for. *Razorcake*, in a continuously more digital-dependent world, is defiantly and ultra-intentionally a print zine. It's important for us to control our means of production, to have full ownership of the media we create. (Unlike

social media platforms and 99.9% of the internet.) Unlike the Quahadi and people who don't want to get shot by fascists, what helps protect us in this destabilized world are the words on the pages, *and* the pages themselves. The meaning of all these words *and* the meaning inherent in ink printed on paper.

I value zines, but I don't fetishize them. I'm a voracious reader. I read on paper as a defense against a world that is more and more fragmented into a blizzard of shiny, brightly colored tiny electronic dots that come and go. Books keep the fracturing outside world at arm's length and invite long-form thought to give context to some of the pieces. Some books are pure escapes, like a mild drug, a reset button. And then there are the books we create. One's in your hands. It's more than just about punk. It's a lighthouse. It illuminates darkened, underground paths leading us to worlds that interest us so much we need to share them. It's a lighthouse that holds a lot of friends together and marks submerged dangers. It is my defense.

Now is a good time to read. It'll help protect you against bullets that have already been fired. It's only a matter of time before they hit their intended targets.

—Todd Taylor

**Suggested Reading:** *Empire of the Summer Moon* by S.C. Gwynne, *Homage to Catalonia* by George Orwell, and *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller* by Italo Calvino

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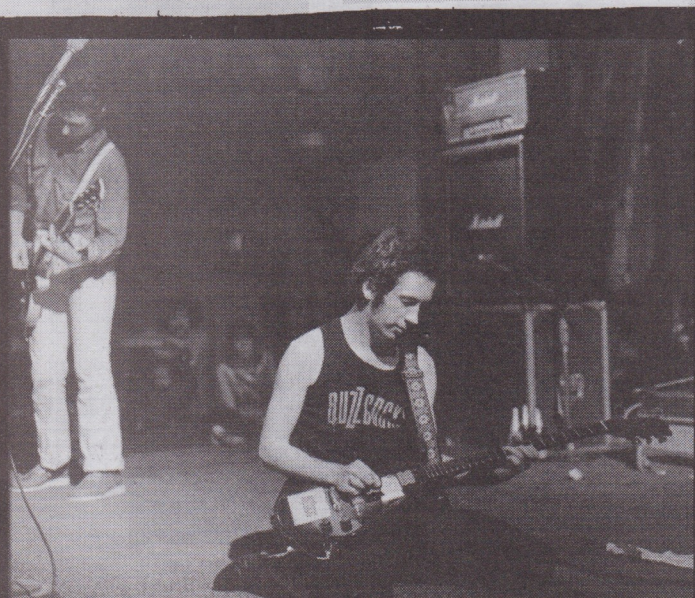
—Italo Calvino

*If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*

**THANK YOU:** The subtle CMYK magic of gold green to brown green with what looks like correction fluid font and flowers zapping out lightning bolt thanks to Eric Baskauskas for the cover and Dan Monick for the wonderfully snarly picture of Amyl And The Sniffers; A flaming goat is sort of like a slam dunk for his style, thanks to Bone Dust for Donna's illo.; Switchblade tongues and butter knife brains thanks to Bill Pinkel for Jim's illo.; Cheeky thanks for depicting Narb in striped bathroom urine-spreading pants to Shane Milner; Each section sold individually in limited-edition prints thanks to Steve Thueson for Dale's illo.; Gold-baked improvised Porta-Jane thirst-quenching thanks to Simon for Bianca's illo.; ¡Tamales! ¡Champurrado! thanks to Mireya Alonzo for the Puro Pinche illo.; If there are earthquakes in Wisconsin, you know who's to blame thanks to Kasia Oniszczyk for the Rhythm Chicken photo; The interview's a thinly veiled vehicle for the launch of Tobio's career being filmed opening door knobs thanks to Vincent Chung, Matt Bell, Carl Gunhouse, David Schwentker, and Jessee Zeroxed for the No Love interview, photos, and layout; Not taking a dig. The Crass polo shirt is sharp! Bonus points to being on Thatcher's official shit list thanks to Nardwuar, Susan Moss, and Dylan Davis for the Steve Ignorant interview, photos, and layout; It was worth it just for the explanation of the word “daggy,” thanks to Dan Monick and Eric Baskauskas for the Amyl And The Sniffers photos and layout; “The weirdos of America have always been ignored but have always made great shit happen” thanks to Mike Faloon, Myles Boisen, Andrew Drury, Michael Bogdanffy-Kreigh, Max Drury, Brett Essler, and Lauren Denitzio for the One Punk's Guide to Free Jazz, photos, and layout.

“If ‘Les Imcompris’ inspired my four-year-old to throw a toy saxophone across the room, imagine what it'll do next time you're knocking back a few beers.” —Chris Terry, Ultra Razzia, Self-titled LP. Thanks to 108's rotation of music, zine, and book reviewers: Camylle Reynolds, Kurt Morris, Paul J. Comeau, Michael T. Fournier, Theresa W., Nørb, Matt Werts, Sal Lucci, Rich Cocksedge, Juan Espinosa, Art Ettinger, Mike Frame, Chris Terry, Sean Koepenick, Jimmy Alvarado, Steve Adamyk, Ryan Nichols, Keith Rosson, The Lord Kveldulfr, Billups Allen, Gwen Static, Cynthia Pinedo, Matt Seward, Ty Stranglehold, Chad Williams, Sean Arenas, Michelle Kirk, Craven Rock, Kayla Greet, Jennifer Federico, Jim Woster, Sean Carswell, Jimmy Cooper, Iggy Nicklbottum, and Tricia Ramos.

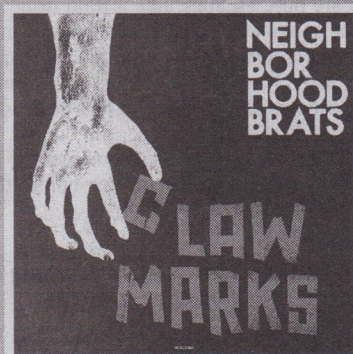
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Pete Shelley, Rest in Peace | photo by Vicki Berndt, 1979



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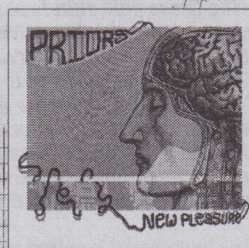
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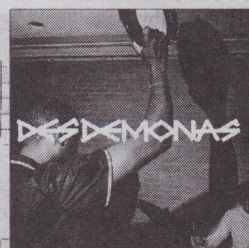
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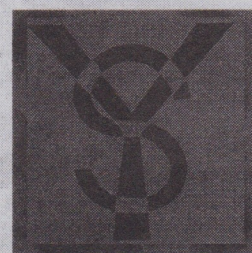
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DESAHUCIADOS  
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LES LULLIES  
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YOUNG SKULLS  
BOMB TRAIN BLUES EP



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The following folks stepped forward to help us do our part over the past two months. Without their help, *Razorcake* wouldn't be what it is.

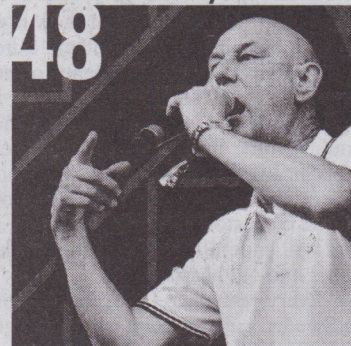
Todd Taylor, Daryl Gussin, Kari Hamaoka, Rishbha Bhagi, Donna Ramone, Marcos Siref, Derek "the sanctity of the pedestrian walkway" Whipple, Dayna Castillo, Ever Velasquez, Nicole Macias, Paul Silver—extra special thanks for uploading multiple hundreds of *Razorcake* podcasts onto archive.org, Matthew Hart, Chris Baxter, Kayla Greet, Jimmy Alvarado, Yvonne Drazan, Dale Drazan, Josh Rosa, Jennifer Federico, Ethan Shapiro, Samantha McBride, Skinny Dan, Robert El Diablo, Alice Bag, Candace Hansen, Marty Ploy,

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This issue is dedicated to the memories of Pete Shelley and Kat Arthur



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**2003? Burned.  
2004? Burned  
some more.**

# The Gävle Goat

The world is a racist shit show right now, and it's bringing all of us down. Sure, there have been victories, but plenty of setbacks too. And in the time between me writing these words and you reading them, the chaos could evolve into a deafening screech that feels incapacitating. Mixed with the holidays, this might be a rough month for a lot of us. So, here's a story, in the spirit of the season, that will hopefully bring a little laughter and cheer into our hearts.

Every year since 1966, the town of Gävle in Sweden erects a giant Christmas goat: the Yule Goat. This goat symbol is Scandinavian, probably pagan, and very cool. The Julbocken, or Yule Goat, might be related to Norse mythology and represent one of the goats that pulled Thor's chariot. Or, more likely, it's from early Slavic harvest festivals involving the god of fertile sun, Dažbog, represented by a white goat. Someone would dress up as this goat and demand offerings (i.e., presents) from people during these celebrations, which was probably terrifying. Later, Saint Nicholas was seen leading this goat-man on a leash, showing he was in control of Satan. As with most Christmasy stuff, it evolved into something nicer and became a goat ghost that made sure everyone prepared the yule correctly. This led to families pranking each other by hiding little straw goats they had made in each other's houses. Then, when wassailing got big (the European Christmas tradition of dressing up and forcing your way into people's homes demanding food, drink, and presents), someone in the group would come dressed as the goat man. Now, the Yule Goat has been replaced by Santa Claus and is generally just a cute straw ornament on and around the tree, or there's a giant one in a town square.

The first giant straw goat in Gävle was built in 1966 by an advertising executive and constructed by his brother's company. On New Year's Eve, at the stroke of midnight, *the goat went up in flames and quickly burned to a cinder*. Thus began the best Christmas tradition in the entire world.

In 1967 and 1968, the nearly forty-five-foot goat made of a simple wood frame and straw mats survived. Then in 1969, after chicken wire had been added to the skeleton, the goat was burned down, again on New Year's Eve. Buckle in, the party's only starting.

The 1970s was a fantastically bad decade for the town's giant goat. In 1970, it was burned down by drunk teenagers within six hours of its completion. They reassembled it with some sad lake reed to finish out the

season. In 1971, sick of people destroying his goat, the advertising exec stopped making them. The Natural Science Club at the nearby School of Vasa took over and made a smaller goat in the same place. Their goat was smashed to pieces that year. In 1973, the goat was sabotaged by unknown forces and collapsed into itself—it actually imploded. In 1974, the goat was burned to the ground. Again. In 1975, it collapsed. Again.

In 1976, things get creative. A student driving a Volvo Amazon took aim and crashed into the rear legs, causing the goat to capsize. In 1977, the goat was burned, and I'd like to think the Swedish punks rejoiced. In 1978, the goat was smashed to pieces, kicked to death by assailants forever unknown. And in 1979, the goat wasn't even finished when someone burned it down. Thinking not all was lost, they built a second goat and fireproofed it. When no one was looking, the second goat was bashed and broken into fireproof pieces.

Next up is the 1980s, and more detailed news coverage about the Gävle Goat. In 1980, on Christmas Eve, the goat was predictably burned down. But in 1981, it survived—the people who paid for that goat were happy, but many of us were sincerely disappointed. Including one man in 1982, who, while drunk on Saint Lucy's Day, December 13, burned the damned goat to the ground. People into math have statistically studied the dates of goat destruction over the decades and discovered they almost always occur on Saint Lucy's or New Year's Eve—the drunkest days of the Swedish holiday season. Huh.

In 1983, the legs were destroyed. In 1984, it burned again. In 1985, the year it made the *Guinness Book of Records*, it was enclosed by a two-meter-high metal fence and guarded by soldiers from the Gävle I 14 Infantry Regiment, but the goat was still burned the fuck down. In 1986, the original advertising group built a goat again, and since then there have been two goats. That year, the larger goat was consumed by fire. 1987 is when the goats were heavily fireproofed—and guess what? That goat went up in yuletide flames anyway.

1988 was an exceptional year for the Gävle Goats, when betting on whether it would make it through the holidays had become an international sensation. Bookies all over Europe were taking bets on when and how the goat would die. They also survived that year. In 1989, the first goat wasn't even finished when it was devoured by an inferno. The goat people raised money from the public to rebuild it. Of course, that one succumbed to flames, too.

The '90s brought about the goat's healthiest decade. Both goats survive 1990, after a bunch of Swedes volunteered to guard the goat. In 1991, the main goat burned, and was rebuilt to be used in a protest against shutting down the Gävle I 14 Infantry Regiment (who, if you recall, unsuccessfully guarded it from fire in 1985). In 1992, both goats were set ablaze on the same night. The main goat was rebuilt—and immediately got burned down again. This was the first year an arsonist was ever caught and arrested. This is also the year the Goat Committee was founded.

In 1993 and 1994 the goats survived, after being guarded by the Swedish Home Guard, and one goat even went to Italy to cheer on Sweden for the Men's World Ice Hockey Championship (they came in third that year). In 1995, as Gävleborg County celebrated its 550<sup>th</sup> anniversary, a Norwegian burned down one goat and was arrested. 1996 is the year the webcams were installed—which are still there today—and best believe I will have that feed running while the rest of you play *Yule Log* on Netflix. Also, the goats survived! And they kind of survived 1997, unless you count the damage caused by the fireworks. Whoops.

Somehow, during a major blizzard, the larger goat was burned in 1998. Everyone is still in awe over the tenacity needed to achieve that one. And in 1999, both goats were obviously set on fire, and only one was rebuilt eventually.

The 2000s bring the best Gävle Goat attacks to date. In 2000, one goat was burned and the other, now nearly fifty-foot goat, was *thrown into the nearby Gävle River*. In 2001, a controversial burning occurred—some dude from Cleveland was arrested for burning the goat after claiming his Swedish friends told him it was tradition and a totally okay thing to do. While his trial played out (he was fined, and then returned to the States before paying), someone used the drama to sneak in and burn the second goat. In 2002, the goat survived, possibly because a Swedish radio and TV personality named Gert Fylding claiming he would guard it—just kidding, a twenty-two-year-old from Stockholm attempting to burn it down but got caught and only slightly damaged it. 2003? Burned. 2004? Burned some more.

My favorite vandals in the goat's fifty years struck December 3, 2005. Witnesses described two figures, one dressed as a gingerbread man and another as Santa Claus, casually approach the larger, main goat. They pulled out bows, flicked their lighters,





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**Two figures, one dressed as a gingerbread man and another as Santa Claus, casually approach the larger, main goat. They pulled out bows, flicked their lighters, and shot flaming arrows at the goat before disappearing into the night.**

and shot flaming arrows at the goat before disappearing into the night. The goat was consumed by fire, and the merry-makers were never caught.

2006, burned. 2007, burned. 2008, started to burn and people ran over and rescued the main goat—only to have someone else burn it down the very next day.

2009 was a banner year for shenanigans. First, someone attempted to light one of the goats on fire and failed. A couple days later, someone attempted to push the second goat into the river, and failed. The same person who tried to drown the goat, tried to light it on fire and failed. So, naturally, someone brought their massive pickup truck and stole the smaller goat. Then, a week later, there was a DDoS attack on the webcams, so no one saw who was responsible for eventually sealing the Gävle Goat's fate and setting it on fire.

In 2010, one of the goat guards said mysterious bandits approached him one night and offered him money to leave his post at a specific time, so that they could steal the goat via helicopter. He refused the money and the goats survived.

In 2011, both goats were burned. 2012, burned again. 2013, after being soaked in flame retardant, the goat absolutely burned down. In 2014, there were at least three arson attempts, but the goats survived—unlike in 2015, when it burned down. And in 2016, it was drenched in gasoline and set aflame on inauguration day. The local high school was sad about not having a goat that year and made a small replica. Their goat was later hit by a car.

But in 2017, the goat survived, with no reported attempts on its life.

Goats, symbolically, are dichotomous. Their Scandinavian Christmas visage can

range from a happy fluffy white goat carrying Santa and his presents, to a darker being who breaks into homes demanding offerings. Central Europe even has Christmas Satan, the half-goat Krampus. The Gävle Goat is also dichotomous, representing both the light and the dark of the holiday. The good cheer and joy, and the capitalism and greed. The duality of the tradition plays out in real time as the giant goat is erected, marveled over, and destroyed, year after year. I love the duality and cyclical nature of it. I have a similar feeling about Christmas itself.

The Gävle Goat is reborn on December 2 this year. And I, for one, hope to raise a glass this season to some Swedish holiday marauders and their book of matches.

—Donna Ramone





# LAZY MICK

JIM RULAND

As I turned the page I realized I was missing the last two pages of my story.

## How Not to Give a Reading Our Brains Are Smarter Than We Think

Last month I had the opportunity to read with one of my heroes, the poet, novelist, screenwriter, and short story writer Barry Gifford.

I could fill this space with Gifford's achievements, but I'll note a few highlights.

In 1978 he co-wrote *Jack's Book: An Oral Biography of Jack Kerouac*. Gifford had the foresight to talk to many of Kerouac's peers while they were still alive in a format publishers were unfamiliar with. Today oral histories are everywhere and *Jack's Book* is still in print.

In 1984 Gifford started Black Lizard, a division of Creative Arts Book Company that published out-of-print crime novels. Black Lizard rejuvenated the careers of pulp novelists Jim Thompson and David Goodis, now considered masters of the genre.

In 1990 his novel *Wild at Heart* was published and subsequently adapted into a movie by David Lynch starring Nicholas Cage, Laura Dern, and Harry Dean Stanton. He also wrote the screenplay for Lynch's film *Lost Highway*.

Gifford could have been as famous as any of the actors, directors, or writers above, but he preferred to stay out of the limelight. He's walked away from baseball scholarships, book deals, and lucrative offers from Hollywood.

He's his own person, and that person is a writer I admire.

To prepare for a profile I wrote of Gifford earlier this year, I reread many of his books, including *Wild at Heart* and the seven sequels he wrote over the next twenty-five years.

These novels, which tell the complete story of Sailor and Lula, are short, dense with data about their characters, and explode with violence that is somehow both poetic and profound.

I suppose it was inevitable, but reading seven sequels to a novel I love made me want to write a sequel of my own.

One afternoon, I wrote the first chapter of the sequel to my novel *Forest of Fortune*. The story is short, loaded with information about the main character, and culminates in a scene of random violence infused with language that aspires to elevate the scene to something bigger than what it is.

In other words, it's a Barry Gifford story. I decided this is what I'd read during my big night with Barry Gifford.

It didn't quite work out that way.

\*

The reading was held at Book Soup on Sunset Boulevard in West Hollywood. The performance area holds no more than a couple dozen people. A sizable crowd assembled to hear Gifford read from his newest book, a collection of stories called *The Cuban Club*.

As the opening act, I read first. The events coordinator introduced me, I got up to the lectern, and began to read my story, which is called "The Yellowjacket."

As I turned from the first page to the second, I realized I was missing the last two pages of my story.

Naturally, I panicked, but only for a brief moment, before quickly denying the reality of my situation: This isn't happening. This is a bad dream.

But it was most definitely happening.

Phase two of my denial involved dismissing it: I'll just run out to the car and get the missing pages from my backpack. I could visualize exactly where those pages were. It would only take a minute, two at the most, to retrieve them.

Mind you, I'm thinking all this while reading my story. So of course I'm not going out to the car. I'm not going anywhere. I'm in the middle of a fucking story.

But if I did go out to the car to get the story, I could just keep going. Just get in the car and drive back to San Diego while the show, eventually, went on without me. Imagine that scene. How long would it take for everyone to come to grips with the fact that I'd left and wasn't coming back?

I wanted to quit, throw in the towel. As I moved into the second part of the second page, I thought that when I reached the end I'd just stop and say something dumb like, "That's all I've got so far. You can read the rest of the story when it's published in four of five years! Har har har!"

But I couldn't do that. That would be terrible and my only job was to not be terrible. These people weren't here to see me. They were here to see Barry Gifford. I

was the warm up act. My job was to keep it short and snappy and not make an ass out of myself.

Under these conditions, delivering a forgettable, mediocre performance was perfectly fine.

So I started thinking about how my story ended. I went backwards through the story, ticking off the moments in my mind, and I thought, I might be able to do this.

Even though the story was relatively new and the only times I'd read the story aloud had been earlier that afternoon while I was rehearsing, I'd rehearsed it, and I felt like the story was there, waiting for me to summon it.

Keep in mind, I'm still reading my story aloud to the audience. I felt like I had two extra brains that were in conversation with each other while my main brain stuck to the regularly scheduled programming.

It felt the way it does when you're in a car accident and time slows down, like the time I was driving a rental Hyundai in Little Canada, Minnesota, while listening to the Briefs and drinking a cup of Hardee's coffee and I went off the road and shit slowed down so much I was able to put the Hardee's coffee cup in the cup holder and turn off the Briefs caterwauling on the CD player, so I could focus on not crashing or stalling out or plunging into one of Minnesota's million lakes, and get back on the highway, which I did.

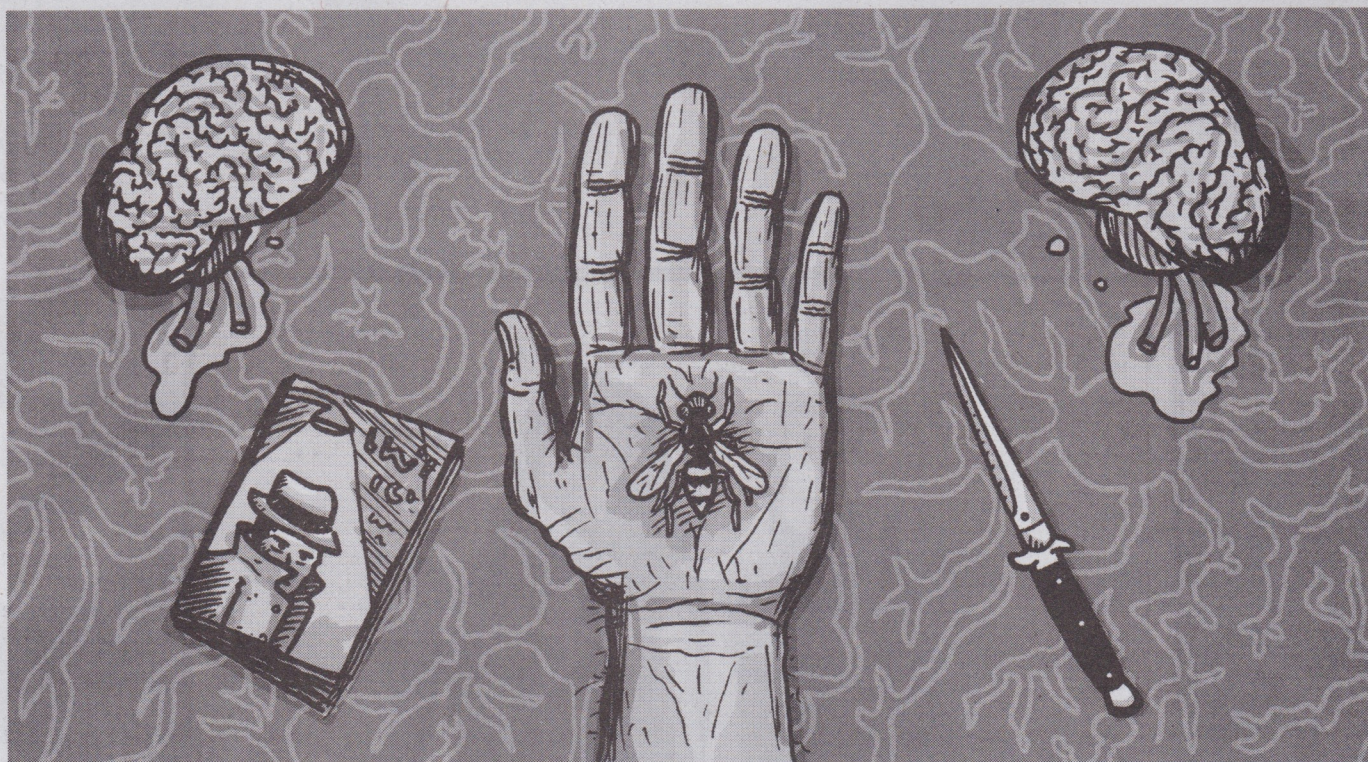
It felt like a dream where you psychoanalyze every awful thing that's happening to you, like, "Oh, shit there's a bear gnawing on my leg and isn't that interesting because I was just thinking about bears the other day when I was at the mall and the shoe store had a California flag so that must have something to do with this exquisite terror I'm experiencing."

I felt certain this was what it felt like to go insane.

I was nearing the bottom of page two. There was no page three. I read a line that got a bit of a laugh from the audience.

I leaned into it and ad libbed a personal anecdote that got an even bigger laugh. That's when I knew I had them. The audience wanted me to succeed and they were right there with me, so let's do this.





BILL PINKEL

# I felt like I had two extra brains that were in conversation with each other while my main brain stuck to the regularly scheduled programming.

No one had any idea I was now stepping off the edge of the platform and going into free fall.

I didn't want anyone to pick up on the back that I was now going "off book," so I pretended to "read" from the page.

The first three-quarters of the story set up the scene at the end that is in turn a set-up for the protagonist to deliver a memorable line.

It goes something like this. Chairman Cloudshadow of the Yukemaya Indian Reservation leaves a Narcotics Anonymous meeting to take a call from his uncle who has tracked down some of the people who robbed his casino. What he doesn't know is whether these individuals started the fire that burned the casino down or took advantage of the conflagration to rob it. The answer will determine the scope and severity of his vengeance, which is a terrible thing either way, but the distinction is important to him.

When he ends the call, he notices a Yellowjacket crawling on his coat sleeve. Cloudshadow opens his hand and the Yellowjacket crawls into his palm. He says

hello to the little creature, as if addressing a long lost friend, before crushing it in his fist.

Cloudshadow says something that's more pithy and cruel than poetic and profound, but that's why Barry Gifford is Barry Gifford and I'm not.

So I cut the exposition short and got right to the action, and when I called up the story from my memory, it was there and it came to me whole, and because I wasn't really reading, I was able to act out the scene with the Yellowjacket in my hand.

The end.

It was a beautiful thing, and by beautiful I mean perfectly mediocre and intensely weird, because it felt like an out-of-body experience where you can see your situation with great clarity without being able to do anything about it.

Or at least that's how I imagine out-of-body experiences work. I've never had one.

The point is I didn't freak out. I didn't flee the bookstore. I didn't die.

And I didn't wake up. It wasn't all a dream. (I wouldn't do that to you.) Though it crossed my mind that I would wake up at

some point as I floated past the discount rack and over to my chair near new arrivals and took my seat beside home and garden and waited for those other brains to go quiet as I settled back down to earth.

\*

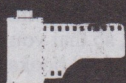
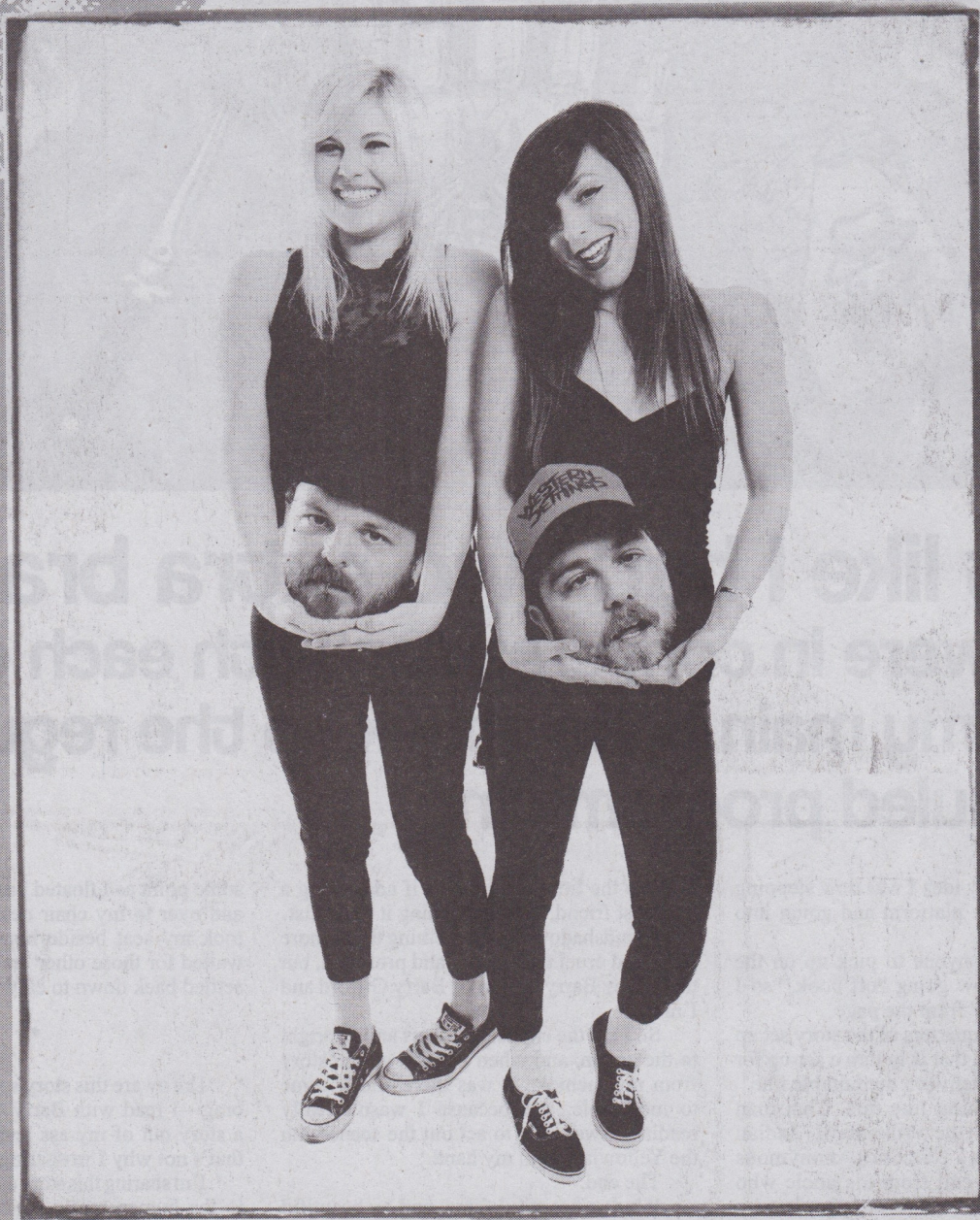
I'm aware this story sounds like a humble brag—I read with Barry Gifford and pulled a story out of my ass and it was great—but that's not why I'm sharing it with you.

I'm sharing this story as a kind of testimony to the human brain, which is a strange and wonderful, but sometimes awful, thing.

Our brains are capable of so much more than we can imagine. By extension, we are capable of things we can't comprehend, especially when you put that brain in the service of your passions, the things that move you to go outside yourself, to the very limit of your capabilities and beyond, so that you can be, if only for a few seconds in a bookstore with your hero, more than what you are.

—Jim Ruland



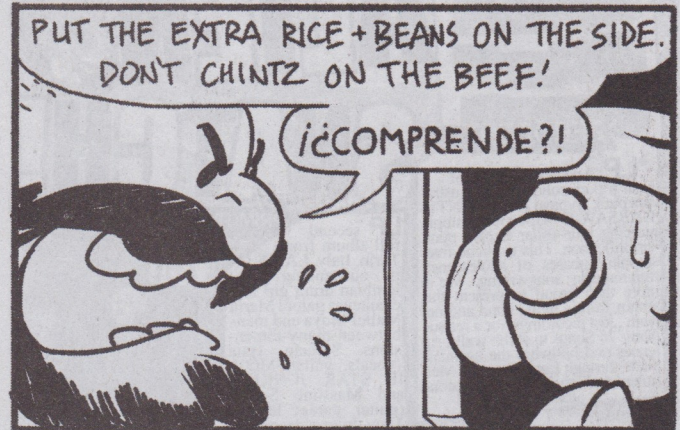


## Rachel Framingheddu's Photo Page

The Bombpops



WON TON NOT NOW GIVE ME EXTRA OR GIVE ME DEATH! LUCKY NAKAZAWA





**ZERODENT**

# ALIEN SNATCH!

**\*LP\*** Apocalyptic reign of bash 'n' pop! solid as rock Australian punk. Typical ZERODENT is WARSAW-WIRE-sque dystopia piercing blue-collar British punk simplification. This is cliché-free, skipping phases of adolescence minimalistic songwriting. We're more than proud to present this album from a living band and not from "lost recordings" or a reissue from '76 Songs to climb walls, rip fences and bullwhip the agendas. Skate through Landscapes of Mer-riment and inhale the dust. Second album from Perth!

**LP** second full album from Furin, Italy. LAME is outstanding. Co-sombian drum girl and chanteuse galore Maria Mallol Moya and man-between-many-dimensions Stefano Isaia (vocals, guitar, MOVIE STAR JUNKIES) and Massimo Scoeca (guitar, garage legend). They drag us deeper and deeper into their forest of darkness, it's a drug binge loop of bloodloss and pumping veins. Death cult garage post-punk with poisoned easy-listening harmonies and life prolonging rhythms evoking unseen roads through swamp rock winter nights. Stomp to their blues, beware the quicksand and pop swirls of hysteria right next. Tim Warren mastering!

**LP PHONE JERKS** are a foursome from Moncton, New Brunswick, CANADA! This is raw crab-shrapnel-Canada! Three dudes and Emily on drums, all on lead vocals means technically a dial-up connection from the ice speedway smash up derby to budget rock heaven. If you remember BRENTWOODS and LOLI & CHONES you're should bet on her, the boys crank it more in a wired METROS way to winter dance party SPACESHITS with some euro teen degenerate REAL LOSERS spikes. You need to look very close today to find this shower of frequencies, blown-out fidelity lo-fi rock combined with flying-ice-cream-cups-fun. It's lo-fi garage punk! You're lost in a infinite time-loop! Get this record and reaffirm your life choices. Cruise to lose!

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# MY NINETY-FIRST COLUMN FOR RAZORCAKE BY BEN SNAKEPIT

I VERY DISTINCTLY REMEMBER THE FIRST MARVEL COMIC BOOK I EVER READ.

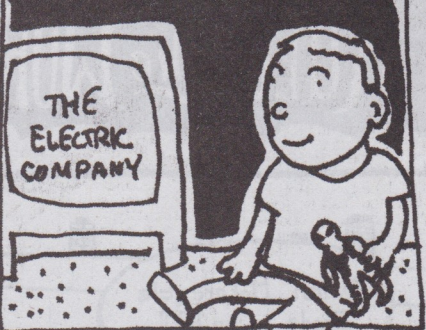


MANY THANKS TO LISA DIBACCO FOR INSPIRATION!!

IT WAS SECRET WARS II, ISSUE 4.



SURE, I HAD LIKED SPIDERMAN AS A KID,



AND I'D WATCHED THE HULK ON TV...



BUT THIS WAS THE FIRST ACTUAL MARVEL COMIC I'D EVER READ.



IT WAS SURPRISINGLY MATURE. IT WAS MUCH MORE COMPLEX THAN JUST SUPERMAN PUNCHING A TRAIN.



IT WAS WHEN I REALIZED THAT COMICS COULD BE MORE THAN JUST KIDS STUFF.



I WAS HOOKED, AND IMMERSSED MYSELF IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE THROUGHOUT MY MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS.



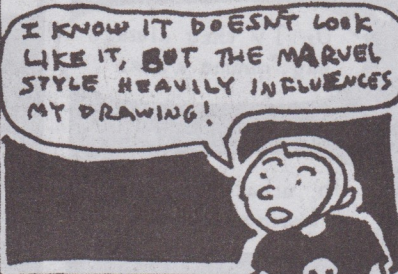
ONE DAY I PICKED UP 'HOW TO DRAW COMICS THE MARVEL WAY?'



I TIRELESSLY PRACTICED EVERY EXERCISE IN THE BOOK.



IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR STAN LEE AND MARVEL COMICS, YOU WOULDN'T BE READING THIS!



R.I.P. TO THE LEGEND



BENSNAKEPIT@GMAIL.COM



# ASIAN GOTH PUNKS RULE the WORLD!



Starring:

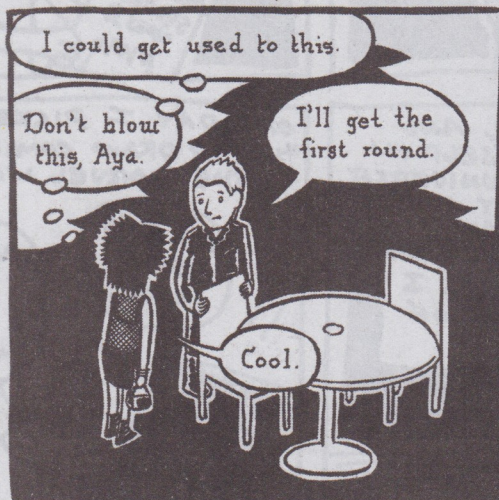
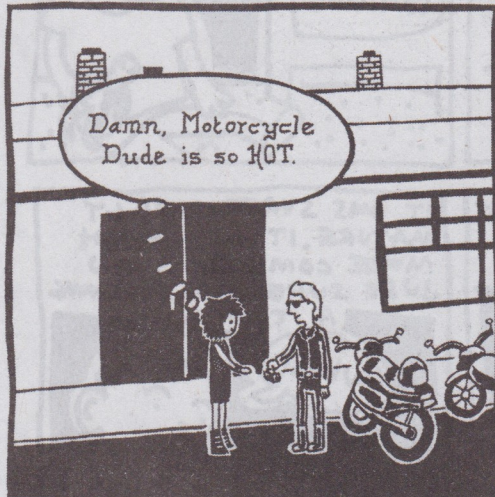


Aya

&

Chris

BY MARINAOMI





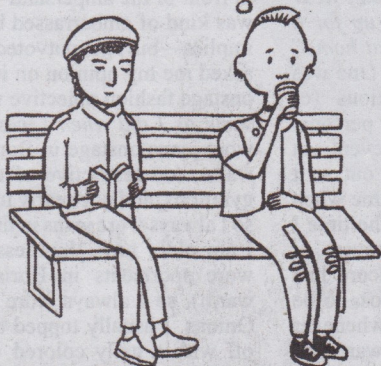
The cutest barista in the world  
is sitting next to you.



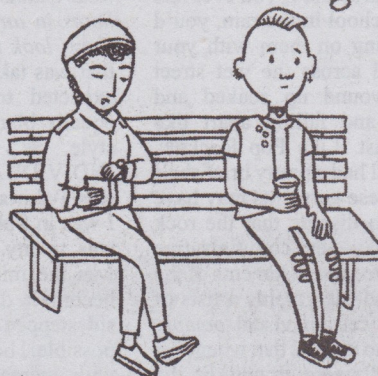
Say something. Jeez, Chris.



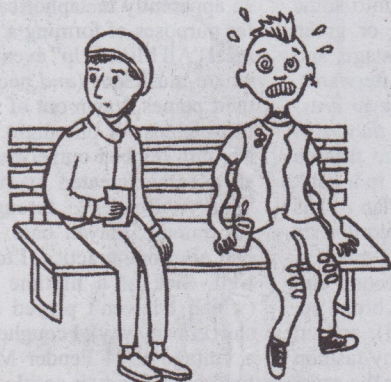
Just say hello.



SAY IT SAY IT SAY IT

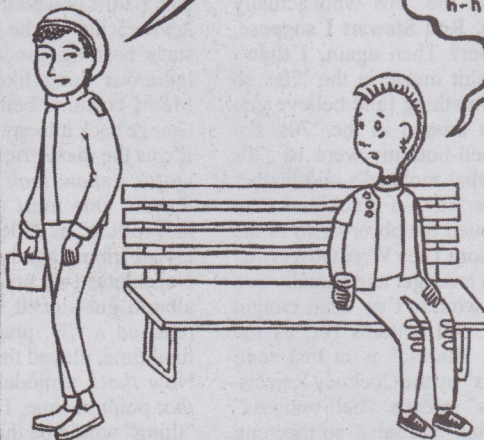


Hello Hello Hello  
Hello Hello



See you around.

h-hello..



MARINAOMI





# AMERICAN GRILLED CHEESE REVIEW

REV. NØRB

The more you  
missed in the  
'70s, the better.

## ARE BELL-BOTTOMS PUNK? A Quest for Fashion in a Post-Truth World

Having grown up in the '70s, I cop to having owned a pair or two of bell-bottoms when I was a kid. They looked pretty cool when you saw other people wearing them (or, more likely, when you saw drawings of other people wearing them in comic books and in advertisements): Groovy lines swooping up out of the ground, suggesting man did not begin as clay lovingly hand-patted into form by his creator, but was actually a disgusting piece of gum on the sidewalk stretched into life by a gross and divine hand. In practice, they were really quite stupid: You'd get them caught in your bike chain, you'd trip all over them playing football in the back yard, and if you ever had to walk home from school in the rain, you'd continually be stepping on them with your heel as they dragged across the wet street until the bottoms wound up soaked and shredded and dirty and falling apart like overcooked pork roast. Like Pop Rocks®, their functional appeal had a pretty brief shelf life. Impractical as these garments may have been, it's still hard to dispute that the rock band clip art of the day—the copyright-free illustrations pasted into advertisements of the period by the rank-and-file graphic artists of the world—retains a certain visual *oomph*, and that's largely due to the fact that whenever generic “rock bands” were drawn in the 1970s, at least one member was invariably depicted wearing striped bell-bottoms. It was quick and effective visual shorthand: *Striped bell-bottoms* = *Rock dude* (the look was usually complemented with a neck scarf, although I can't remember a whole lot of male performers in the '70s who actually wore neck scarves. Rod Stewart I suppose, maybe Steven Tyler? Then again, I didn't listen to a ton of shit music in the '70s, so maybe I missed something [and believe you me, the more you missed in the '70s, the better]). Striped bell-bottoms were to '70s visual shorthand what mohawks and leather jackets were to the '80s—a quick and easy visual cliché that cued the observer in to the nature of Those Whom They Were Observing. By the time I was a teenager and actually in a band, however, I wouldn't've been caught dead in a pair of bell-bottoms (or, as the English call them, “flares,” as in that song “Flares and Slippers” by the Cockney Rejects. Apparently “flares” means “bell-bottoms” and “slippers” means “sandals,” so the song is about hippies. I had always imagined it was about some guy running around the

roadside in his bathrobe, lighting off fireworks so his disabled vehicle didn't get plowed into). It was the early '80s, and we disdained such frippery! Not only did we disdain bell-bottoms and neck scarves as the specific (and possibly apocryphal) signifiers of a previous generation of squares, we disdained the very notion of sartorial frippery in general. *Dressing up to play a show is for rock stars, man!* The sartorial zeitgeist of the hardcore days demanded that one wore one's everyday garb on stage; one was expected to dress identically for the show as one would dress at work or school. There was that song “Gate Crashers” by SOA with the line “*They wear chains and they wear leather, they wear boots in any weather, never dress up for a show, look this way when they're at home*” that was taken very much to heart. One was expected to look equally obnoxious (or equally bland, depending on one's personal style, as we were great believers in INDIVIDUALITY!) day in and day out, so it was T-shirts and jeans on stage for me when I was in Suburban Mutilation. By the time I was in my second band, Depo-Provera, it was the mid-to-late-'80s and hardcore had become a dull and pointless albatross to be sidestepped and short-circuited whenever possible. I began to pepper my stage wardrobe with increasingly ridiculous items—goofy hats and jackets, ponchos, whatever amused me at the time. The sartorial tyranny of the hardcore era was eroding at a steady clip. By the time I was in Boris The Sprinkler in the '90s, my on-stage fashion was in full revolt: Far from taking the stage in the same jeans and T-shirt in which I might have mowed the lawn earlier in the day, I went into full-on stage costume mode. I'd change into some ludicrous thing like a Wolverine or green M&M costume before I went on stage, and change back into my street clothes afterwards. It was the diametric opposite of “*never dress up for a show, look this way when they're at home.*” One must always keep the fashion ball rolling. In 2006, I was briefly in a punk Dylan tribute band called Nob Dylan & His Nobsoletes (we practiced once, recorded an album, got signed to Alternative Tentacles, released a CD, practiced for a second and final time, played three shows, and broke up. Now *that's* a model of efficiency!), and, at that point in time, I decided that my fashion “thing” would be that I would wear the exact same clothes on stage as I wore on the front cover of the album. As I thought about it, it

started to bother me that when you buy a record by a band, you picture them in your head as looking a certain way, then, when you go see them, they're never dressed the same as they were on the album cover, so, deep down, on some unspoken level, they never quite match your expectations. My solution was to don the same cap, grey “HOOT” T-shirt, and purple-and-black-striped button-up shirt that I wore for the cover photo to all our shows. *Let it not be said that Nob Dylan failed to match your expectations!* For the last five years, I had been in a band called Rev. Nørb & The Onions (it wasn't my idea to have my name in front of the ampersand—in point of fact, I was kind of embarrassed by the egomania it implies—but I got outvoted. Actually, nobody asked me my opinion on it), where my main onstage fashion objective was to *not look the same as I did when I was in Boris*. I never wore jeans onstage in Boris—they were too warm, too restrictive of my overtly sexual gyrations, and not nearly ludicrous enough—so I always wore jeans in the Onions (figuring I am older now, thus less wiggly). I never wore sportcoats in Boris (too bulky and warm), so I always wore a sportcoat in the Onions. I usually topped the whole shebang off with a gaily colored wig and a pair of ridiculous sunglasses, making my stage look essentially my regular look, subtly modified for enhanced comedic impact. After five years of Oniony goodness, I exited the fold, thereby becoming bandless (and therefore at least temporarily freed from the unyielding shackles of fashion slavery). With nature abhorring a vacuum and all, I swiftly decided my next Rock Move was to place my name in an apparently metaphorical hat, to be drawn for purposes of forming a one-off band for a local “All Mixed Up” event—an annual show where musicians (and people like me) have their names drawn out of metaphorical hats, form bands for one night, and play a show. My unit dubbed ourselves “Thy Beastliest,” an anagram created by running the phrase “Shitty Beatles” through an anagram generator. I played bass. When our singer quit after one practice, I took over vocals as well. Sick of a lifetime of crappy basses (which I haven't played since the jeans/T-shirt era anyway), I coughed up the dough for a vintage 1974 Fender Music Man bass. I figure everybody is entitled to one really nice instrument in their lives, and, goddammit, this one's mine. With practice, I find I can





SHANE MILNER | @TALSORIAN

I begin to wonder why I hadn't rediscovered the magic of flare-leg trousers sooner.

As I walk towards the urinal, with my bell-bottoms...dragging behind me...in puddles...of piss...it kinda all came back to me.

sing and play bass passably, at least for one short set. Preston and Caleb—our drummer and guitarist—are outstanding. Everything is going swimmingly—except for the rather dodgy problem of *what the fuck am I gonna wear onstage?* Jeans, T-shirts, and boots I did when I was a teenager, nutty costumes I did to death, suitcoats are too bulky to wear under a bass, and I don't want anything perched atop my head that might require in-flight adjustment. From a fashion standpoint, I'm really rather fucked from the waist up. *The next evolution in Nørbliness must, of necessity, be instigated from the penis down, if for no other reason than to draw attention away from my slipshod musical abilities!* I muse over this fashion pickle for some time, and, in desperation, my mind turns back to the inspirational doggerel of my youth: *What does every great bass player have, above all else?* That's right! A PAIR OF STRIPED BELL-BOTTOMS (and maybe a neck scarf)!

Thusly inspired (though eschewing the neck scarf due to my dangerously pointy Adam's apple) I scour the open market for a pair of striped bell-bottom trousers. I wind up having to mail-order them from England, a transaction which involves terminology reminding me that Johnny Rotten once sang "*I don't wear flares!*" in the song "Seventeen." Since I spent about a quarter-century thinking that line was "*I don't like cabbage!*", I discount his opinion. The big day comes, and Thy Beastliest roar into action—flares, cabbage, and all. Although I have purchased the smallest size black-and-white-striped bell-bottoms England has to offer, the goofy things are still a disquietingly loose fit. After the first song, my pants are already sliding down my pelvis to an unsightly degree, and I am reduced to tucking the women's basketball jersey I am wearing into my imported, black-and-white-striped bell-bottoms, lest I become improperly de-pantsed. I figure I can wriggle

my jersey free during our last number, "Skinny Dipping in the Lake of Fire," and have my pants drop as a stunningly on-topic grand finale. Naturally, when we get to the last song, I can't get my jersey out of my pants, and I end the set sadly clothed. As I pack up my gear following our set, it is clear that my new look has gone down a storm. Thy Beastliest are a hit, and my black-and-white-striped bell-bottoms have clearly carried the day! *Bell-bottoms are the answer! Bell-bottoms are the future! Bell-bottoms are the way and the light!* As I head to the men's room, I begin to wonder why I hadn't rediscovered the magic of flare-leg trousers sooner. As I walk towards the urinal, with my bell-bottoms... dragging behind me... in puddles... of piss... it kinda all came back to me.

Løve,  
Nørb



RAZORCAKE 17





I'M AGAINST IT

DESIGNATED DALE

You're not too cool for this movie, and if you say you are, you're not fooling anyone but yourself.

# The Golden Year of the Silver Screen: 1979

Before the current era of internet streaming services, the onslaught of digital satellite television, and plethora of cable companies, there were monthly subscription television services (often called pay channels) that were quite popular. Starting up in the late '70s, the big two here in the States were ONTV and SelecTV. While both services offered uncut films, ONTV often had sporting and music events, while SelecTV concentrated more on movies of all sorts, foreign included. My parents couldn't care less about the sports programming. They chose the SelecTV service a few years after it hit the market here in Los Angeles.

The great thing I remember about getting this new type of television programming piped into our house was all the opportunities to watch movies I never had the initial chance of watching in theatres, usually because I was too young to go see most of what I wanted to at the time. Before, I had to be lucky enough to catch *The* (insert TV station's name here) *Saturday Night Movie* that was usually edited beyond recognition. SelecTV gave us feature films at our viewing disposal, all in their uncut and entertaining glory.

Like cable or satellite pay services these days, pay channels showed movies that were no longer running in the theaters, so you actually knew what you were in for, as far as programming was concerned. The programming around October was my favorite, as SelecTV made it an annual tradition to have great horror and thriller titles on rotation, leading up to some of the best of these genres running the entire night of Halloween. I was a ten-year-old heathen child when I got to first experience this kind of cinematic overload in my own living room, so I was pretty excited. I'll never forget the first time I watched the original *Halloween* (1978). Michael Myers still holds the title of pure evil as far as I'm concerned, continuing to leave his murderous competition in the dust: "The blackest eyes... the devil's eyes."

As the years went on, I noticed some of the movies, which became constant favorites of mine, weren't just from what I took in as a kid sitting in front of the television plugged into that SelecTV cable box from my childhood home. No, some of these noted faves were all originally released theatrically in 1979. That would make these movies forty years old (Happy New Year, by the way, dear

readers!). While there are far more films to dig from 1979 than the titles I'm about to get into here, I took a second to rifle through my brain and came up with ten that have stuck with me all these years. Hope some of your faves are here, or become new faves if you haven't already seen any of 'em.

## 1941

(December 14, 1979)

This is a hilarious look at what could've actually happened if the evil axis of Germany and Japan decided to touch down off the Southern California coast during World War II. The golden age *SNL* alumni Dan Aykroyd and John Belushi make this one more than a barrel of laughs, but the entire supporting cast including John Candy, Ned Beatty, Slim Pickens, and Robert Stack make this one of the best movies to watch during the Christmas season. I remember watching this more than a couple times with my old man, who laughed his ass off every time and told me true stories of the mandatory wartime blackouts in Los Angeles when he was a kid during the time this film was based.

## ALIEN

(June 22, 1979)

This is definitely one of, if not the greatest, space-themed thrillers of all time. Bottom line: If you're ever out travelling in space and get a distress call from a distant moon? Fuck the moon—it's on its own. With special effects from the artiste himself (H.R. Giger), it sets a tone that is damn near timeless and holds up to viewing this very day. Starring an ass-kicking Sigourney Weaver, a pre-*Repo Man* Harry Dean Stanton, and stomach-troubled John Hurt, *Alien* continues to thrill space/sci-fi fans alike and beyond, not to mention it was directed by Ridley Scott, the same guy who directed a film a few years later you all might remember called *Blade Runner*.

## APOCALYPSE NOW

(August 15, 1979)

Regarded as one of the first movies that took a look inside the psyche of the soldiers during the Vietnam War, *Apocalypse Now* remains one of the more dark and disturbing films of its genre. It's a government-ordered conflict within the conflict, if you will. As that may be, there are still plenty of entertaining

scenes, a few even laughable at times (the surfing scene with Lt. Colonel Bill Kilgore played by Robert Duvall is a prime example). This film is often cited for the inclusion of acting veteran Marlon Brando in his last great role—and rightly so—but Martin Sheen's portrayal of Captain Benjamin Willard carries the weight of this classic all the way through.

## ESCAPE FROM ALCATRAZ

(June 22, 1979)

The great Clint Eastwood stars in this biopic as Frank Morris, the man who planned and executed a prison escape from Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary in 1962, along with brothers John and Clarence Anglin. Without ruining it with the details, the film basically shows the tedious, day-by-day intricacies the three had to toil at in order to get the hell off of that island. It must be noted here that the complete jerkstore of a warden is portrayed perfectly here by actor Patrick McGookan, who you'll want to slap a few times while watching this film. It's not known what became of the three escapees, as their bodies were never officially recovered from an extensive search in the San Francisco Bay by the Feds. Great movie.

## THE JERK

(December 14, 1979)

Yet another golden age *SNL* cast member done good here! Steve Martin not only starred in this '70s comedy classic, but he was also involved in writing the screenplay. Paired with the always-entertaining Bernadette Peters, Martin set the comedy bar with this film; riding the wave of goofy he has always been known for as Navin Johnson, the oblivious doofus from St. Louis who sets out to conquer the world. Along the way, he gets jobs at a carnival (the corn dog scene exchange makes me snicker to this day) and at a gas station before making a huge name for himself. This is still one of his funniest movies to date and highly recommended viewing for those in search of laughs.

## OVER THE EDGE

(July 7, 1979)

Matt Dillon's first motion picture role as Richie, one of the pissed-off, rebellious teens who only abides by one law: "A kid who tells on another kid is a dead kid." Set





STEVE THUESON

## If you're ever out travelling in space and get a distress call from a distant moon? Fuck the moon—it's on its own.

in a tract housing community called New Granada, this movie tells the story of teens getting fed up with the oppressive nature of their parents, school, and cops, soon taking matters into their own hands. This film scared the shit out of some parents, to the point that the theatrical release almost didn't happen here in the States. Glad it did. Not only does the movie still hold its own, the soundtrack is pretty damn good, with the likes of Cheap Trick, The Cars, and the Ramones, which brings us to...

### ROCK 'N' ROLL HIGH SCHOOL

(August 24, 1979)

If you're reading this magazine, I don't think I have to tell you how great this one is. It's one of cult producer Roger Corman's finest film triumphs and humorously directed by Allan Arkush. While nowhere near as violent as *Over the Edge*, *RNRHS* has enough shenanigans that result in Riff Randell (P.J. Soles) taking over and completely destroying her high school. Besides the live Ramones performances throughout the film, extra punk points must be given to background cameos from Kidd Spike (Controllers, Gears), Darby Crash (Germs), and Rodney Bingenheimer, who was hip enough to play the Ramones on the radio here in L.A. for the first time back in 1976. Did I mention the MC5 are also included in the scoring of the actual film (but not on any format of the retail soundtrack)? Required viewing, folks.

### ROCKY II

(June 15, 1979)

Ah, c'mon. You're not too cool for this movie, and if you say you are, you're not fooling anyone but yourself. This second installment of the *Rocky* series once again stars Sylvester Stallone as the meat-headed heavyweight fighter Rocky Balboa, the Philly fighter with a heart the size of Pennsylvania who ends up having a rematch with Apollo Creed (portrayed by Carl "Action Jackson later on down the line" Weathers). It's rounded out perfectly with Burgess Meredith who plays the cantankerous Mickey, Rocky's trainer and mentor. This sequel has it all—action, humanity, and is just plain entertaining. Burt Young, who plays Rocky's brother-in-law Paulie, adds just enough comedy to balance it all out.

### THE WARRIORS

(February 9, 1979)

Anyone who's known me long enough, knows this is one of my favorite films, *ever*. A little over a year after it hit the theaters, I watched it for the first time as a kid on *SelectTV* and was hooked. I can't put my finger on why I became so fascinated upon my first of many viewings, but director Walter Hill did an outstanding job directing this '70s cult classic, mostly on overnight shoots all over the greater NYC area. Characters abound in this gritty film about the Warriors, a gang trying to make it back to Coney Island ("C.I.

The Big Coney!") after being falsely accused of a murder. If you're one of the few people who have yet to see this movie, put it on the top of your next-movie list. Hell, get in touch and we can watch it here at our house. (Right, Juan?)

### WHEN YOU COMIN' BACK, RED RYDER?

(February 9, 1979)

Based on a Mark Medoff play (who also wrote the screenplay), this is another one of my all-time fave films, thanks to *SelectTV* long ago. This psychological mindfuck of a film has gone under the radar for years, with a super-limited theater run and never officially released for home sale (except in Australia for some reason). People who know about this movie are usually big fans, especially due to Marjoe Gortner's exceptional role as Teddy, the drug dealer making his way through the American desert from Mexico with his girlfriend when his VW van breaks down. Teddy then wanders into the tiny town's diner. That's when all the unnerving fun starts with his terrorizing the customers and employees, whose backgrounds have been set leading up to this portion of the film. Gortner's one-liners alone make this film highly recommended. It can be found with a little "hunting" online.

—Designated Dale



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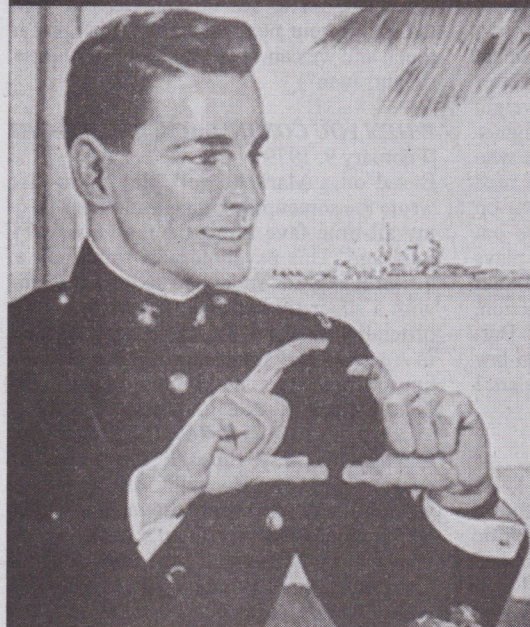
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Regardless,  
I tried, and  
though I failed,  
I learned.

# Wet Cargo

It had been eight years since I last saw my friend Jen. We hadn't talked much since then, but when she invited me to her wedding, I booked a ticket to Montana without hesitation.

I had been to Montana once before, in the summer, to visit her. Jen's wedding was in October, which is considerably colder than the summer. I wasn't even sure I had the right clothes. L.A. in October is still jean shorts weather.

She lives in a town about an hour outside of Bozeman that is famous for its cold, aggressive wind. It's beautiful, I learned, especially in the fall, when the quiet sidewalks are covered with crunchy leaves and the wind makes the skies crisp and blue.

I came in the night before the wedding, in time for a pre-party at her and her soon-to-be husband's home. When I arrived, the house was full of people and guests spilled into the backyard.

Everyone seemed to know each other already—Jen and her husband Todd's friends all lived close by; their families were already well acquainted. Jen and Todd were working their way around the room, getting nabbed mid-conversation to say hi to this person or help that person find something in another part of the house.

I knew only one other person at the party, but I didn't want to attach myself to one person and force them to talk to me for the entire night.

So I served myself some pie—because a genius assembled a pie, brought it to this party, and cooked it at the house, causing all the rooms to fill with the smell of hot apples, cinnamon, and butter—and went outside, where the beer was chilling on the cold concrete.

I opened my beer and as I was popping the cap off, I realized the sky was full of stars and I could see, conservatively, a billion of them. It wasn't as cold outside the house as I'd expected. The wind was more like a breeze, and it felt good to be a little cold. Someone had started a fire in a fire pit farther back in the yard. I pulled up a chair and stared at the fire while some people who already knew each other talked about something I don't remember.

What I do remember is thinking how, the last time I'd seen Jen, she'd been questioning if she'd stay in Montana. She felt like she wasn't fitting in. She wasn't happy at her job. She hadn't really connected with anyone.

It was so great to see her in her house full of people who know her and love her, who bring pies to bake in her kitchen.

I wondered how much she had changed since we'd last seen each other, how much we'd still have in common. Would she be different, now that she was happier? She and I had traveled together for weeks at a time, been with each other in very grumpy moments and with very many bug bites. I'd seen many sides of her and gotten along with all of them so far, but who's to say that meant we'd still have the same connection now?

After a little while, Jen came out to the backyard. "I was looking for you!" she said. She sat down in an open chair nearby and we started to catch up, speaking our answers across the fire pit. And then someone having a conversation nearby mentioned Gatorade.

"Do you remember that time you tried to pee in a Gatorade bottle?" she asked me. For some reason, the other people having conversations nearby stopped talking. "We were... oh man, I don't remember where we were, but I remember you really had to pee, and all we had was that Gatorade bottle. And it didn't work out."

She was right. It really did not work out.

Jen did not remember why it had been vitally necessary for me to try to pee in a bottle, so it was left to me to explain to her and all the people around the fire pit, who were now listening, that we had been in Indonesia, and we had just come down from the mountains.

The bus down from the mountains made one useful stop, in a small town, where about two buses passed each day to take you somewhere else. Everyone else on our mountain bus had gotten on the first bus that came through town. But our next destination required that we catch the second bus.

This town was very small. The roads were dirt and the houses were spread out. The bus dropped us off in the morning, when the small town was lively. The first bus came in the early afternoon, taking everyone but us. The sun started to go down and Jen and I were still waiting. The people in the town headed home. The bus station, a one-room office, closed its door. "I'll be back after dinner," the guy who worked in the bus station told us. He didn't say so, but he seemed unsure the last bus would actually arrive.

We were hungry and tired. We'd eaten all our snacks. We were starting to think this bus would never come and we'd have to sleep

on the floor outside the bus station. We also didn't want to walk away from the bus stop, in case our bus showed up right then and we blew our chance to continue on. To make matters worse, I suddenly had to pee.

"Go in the bushes," Jen told me. But I was afraid that the minute I dropped my pants to pee, the bus station guy would come back and see me pantless and peeing very close to his place of business. So I crafted a solution which was me, sticking an empty Gatorade bottle up the wide leg of my very cool cargo shorts so that I could pee into it discreetly and without the fear of being caught with my pants down.

There were a few things my plan did not take into account. One: strength of stream. Two: the opening on a Gatorade bottle looks very wide, but is actually not very wide. Three: I had never done this before, successfully or otherwise.

Regardless, I tried, and though I failed, I learned. And later, when the bus station man came back, he did not notice that there was a pretty good amount of pee on my pants. DISCREET.

When the man who works at the bus station returned from dinner, he told us that the bus was never this late and was probably not going to come, but he knew a guy who drove a taxi. He had called that man, who had agreed to take us to our destination for a reasonable price.

It was totally dark an hour later when the man showed up in a black Mitsubishi Montero. He was sweaty and jumpy but focused, like he had drunk a tallboy of Red Bull and then taken some study drugs in order to stay alert for the two-hour ride to our destination.

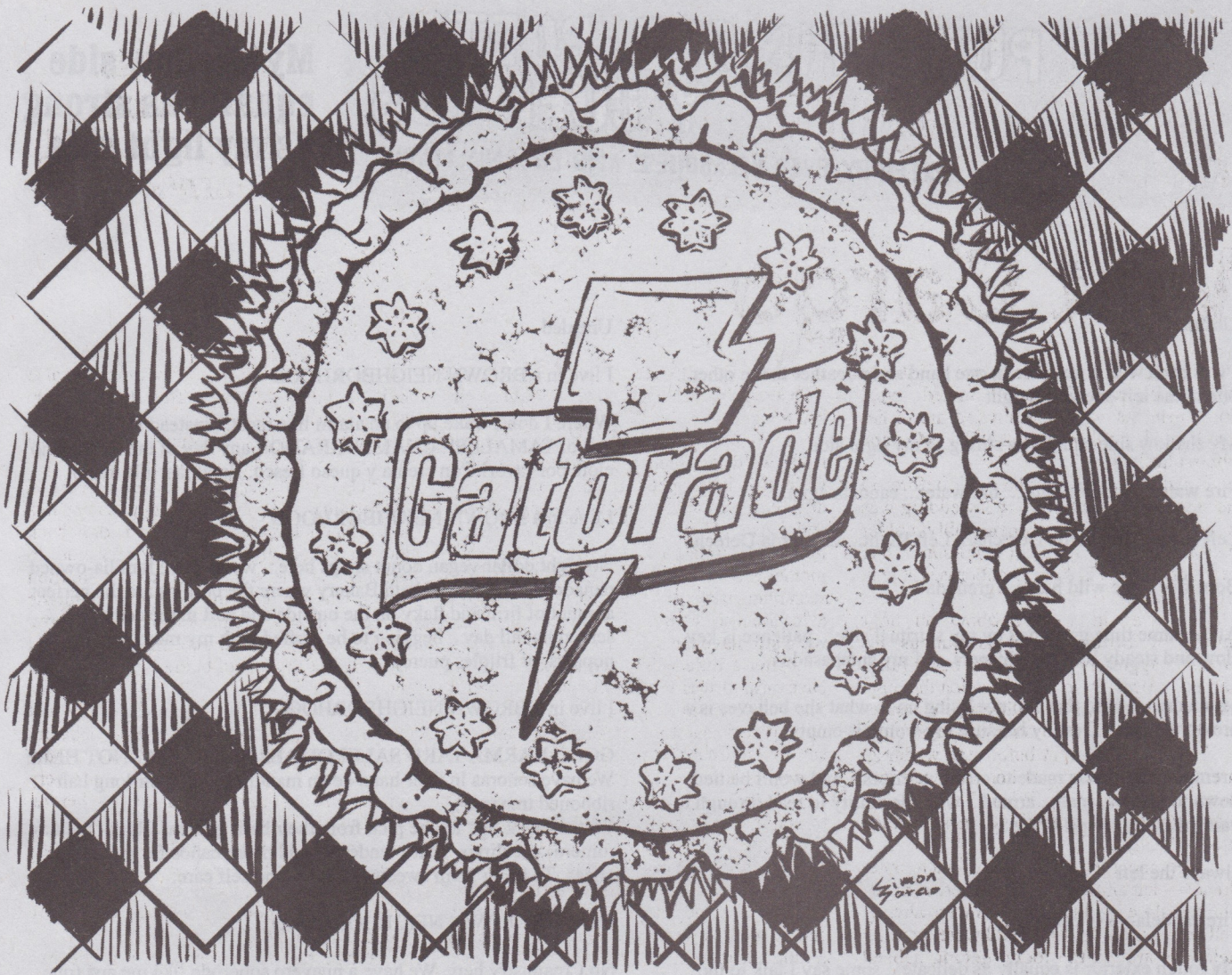
He loaded our bags in the back of his car and we sat in the back seat. He drove fast on a two-lane road. It seemed like the only lights for miles were his headlights and those of cars passing the opposite way. I started to doze off.

I woke up to an intense turbulence as the car went off the road and into what I can only assume was lumpy, muddy land that had been cleared for farming because although we were seriously jostled, we never hit anything—no plants, no fences, no people. We yelled nevertheless.

When the car stopped jumping, our driver turned the engine off and looked back at us. "Are you okay?" he asked.

When we said we were fine, he got out and walked around to the back of the car.





SIMÓN SOTELLO

“Do you remember that time you tried to pee in a Gatorade bottle? And it didn’t work out.” she asked me.

She was right. It really did not work out.

He opened the rear door and from under our bags, he pulled out a cooler and removed slices of something—a fruit with a green rind and white flesh.

He reached over the back seat. “Here, try this,” he said, holding the fruit out. Each slice of the mystery fruit covered the palm of his hand.

I don’t remember his name, but I remember his hair, straight and black, whooshing gently in the breeze as twenty feet away, cars buzzed by on the road with a comforting frequency. He looked so hopeful

that we would take the fruit and forgive him for scaring the shit out of us.

We took the fruit. It smelled like nothing, so I bit in. The flesh of the fruit had a texture I immediately, definitely did not like, but I swallowed it. He seemed pleased. “That’s durian. Indonesian people like it. I’m glad you like it too.”

After we’d consumed about half of the massive slice of fruit, he got back in the car and we continued on without incident, arriving safely at our destination not long after that.

“Wow, I can’t believe I don’t remember any of that,” Jen said. “My favorite part is still where you basically peed your pants.” She laughed and other people around the fire laughed too, and for some reason, her laughter made me feel comfortable and confident that whatever it was about her that made us get along so well in the first place was still there.

—Bianca





# PURO PINCHE POETRY Y CUENTOS

EDITED BY EVER VELASQUEZ AND EUGENIA NICOLE

My shadow side  
equally as strong  
as my light side

## Untitled

I was born with a machete in one hand and a feather in the other...  
one in the left one in the right

My shadow side equally as strong as my light side

Fire water... candela agua... fire water... candela agua...

Left Right... Izquierda Derecha... Left Right... Izquierda Derecha

Born free... the wild horse... greñuda

At the same time grounded by my spiritual side... patience is key...  
slow and steady like the whispers... of my antepasados

Mi madre... afraid that I'm not living up to what she believes is a  
brown woman's Destiny because my womb is empty

I remind her... I was made to create warriors... and won't be tied  
down to just any man... armed... with the ability to read through la  
vaina they try to spit at me...

always the left

Fire candela—fire candela

My rough exterior is equally as delicate... some say I talk to the  
animals and niños alike... balanced in nature and the chaos of the  
city... I KNOW HOW TO DISCONNECT... some say disappear...  
this helps with picking my herbs and foraging for my baños

espremo reso espremo reso ...

always the right

Water agua water agua

Right left... derecha izquierda... right left

## Untitled

I live in a BROWN NEIGHBORHOOD

Where I don't wake up to an alarm like most... instead it's the sweet  
call of TAMALES!! CHAMPURRADO!! any day of the week. Uno  
elote por favor! Con crema y queso fresco. Breakfast a la mano.

I live in a BROWN NEIGHBORHOOD

No eight dollar vegan donut shops here... we do have familia-owned  
panaderias como Elizabeth Bakery where the bolillos are the perfect  
amount of firm and flaky on the outside and soft in the center...  
served hot all day... begging to be stuffed with my mom's carnitas,  
nopales, or frijoles puercos.

I live in a BROWN NEIGHBORHOOD

GOOD KARMA YARD SALE? QUE ES ESA VAINA? NOT HERE  
We have señoras in their hand-sewn mandiles with their long hair  
ribboned trenzas.

On the block that let me pick from their herb gardens. Ruda- menta-  
romero- eucalipto. That I tenderly hand make baños for my loved  
ones... To bring them sweetness, love, and self care.

I live in a BROWN NEIGHBORHOOD

No Creamistry here. We have a nuevo soberodo like me apa (que  
en paz descansas) that rides into the sunset on his bike serving three  
delicious handmade flavors vanilla- chicle- limón packed in a sphere  
divided by three triangles reminding me of those brilliant colors and  
shapes of my kaleidoscope I played with endlessly as a niña.

I live in a BROWN NEIGHBORHOOD

No Jamba Juice around here...

I can go a la jugueria for a Vampiro, Tejino, un Verde, zanahoria,  
betabel, the mixes are endless... Where el señor  
Always flashes that Colgate smile showing you his teeth glistening  
in placas... like our indígena did... and we still do today.

This is my brown neighborhood... change isn't needed here

—Ever a.k.a. the girl about town



Ever is an L.A.-born DIY artist, spirit, community organizer, zine maker,  
writer, thirteen year volunteer with Razorcake, and co-creator of Puro  
Pinche Poetry Gritos De Barrio, this poetry column which is gearing into its  
third year. They help create awareness to social issues through mural painting,  
stencil, zine, collage, screen printing and drawing art workshops. Ever's DIY

RAZORCAKE 24

art includes 2018's self-curated art and performance show Baños, a personal  
look into both personal spiritual and artistic view of ancestral self-care.

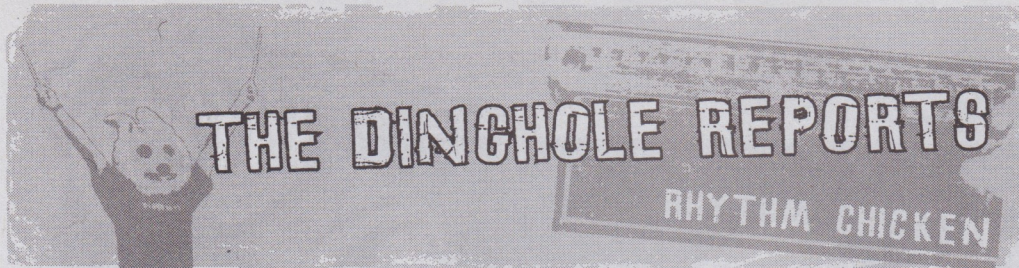
IG: @ever.a.k.a.thegirlabouttown

ever.a.k.a.the.girl.about.town@gmail.com









Progress, it's  
in our blood!

# Niagara Escarpment Basement Bedrock and Roll!

When I was a young boy growing up in Green Bay, Wis., I spent a very large percentage of my time in my family's basement. Any roughhousing or tomboy activity my brothers and I got into was usually met with our mom saying, "Okay, boys. Take it down to the basement!" The basement is where we built forts, shot BB guns, and worked with tools. During brutally cold Wisconsin winters, the basement was a substitute for playing outside. Once in my teens, the basement became my winter skatepark. Two mini quarter pipes placed about ten feet apart got as much use as the two basement poles I used to skate endless figure-eights around. A few years later, our basement became an occasional epicenter for the exploding sounds of drums and guitar amps. I'll never forget the first time I heard many homes in warmer climates, like Florida and California, did not have basements. *Those poor kids! No basements?* Yeah, the basement was definitely the coolest place in the house.

More often than not, the basement became a mysterious and complex assortment of all the odd things that were not granted space upstairs. Anytime something new was brought home that didn't really fit in anywhere else it usually ended up here. The basement was part storage, part workshop, part laundry space, and part weird museum. Dad's boxes of junk from his childhood were stacked next to Mom's old hairstyling equipment from the sixties. An old boat motor laid on its side beneath the broken pool table between the chest freezer and the sump pump. The furnace and water heater fed the pipes and air ducts which spider-webbed overhead to all corners of the basement. The cement floor and cement walls were nearly indestructible. The basement is where all different versions and stages of naughty were carried out by most Midwestern kids.

Over the last thirty years, I have lived in many odd and interesting places. My Milwaukee apartments afforded me no basement space. My Krakow, Poland apartments offered no basement space. My Wisconsin Northwoods trailer certainly had no basement, nor did the ever-popular woodshed. The apartments in Nevada had no basements. There was one house a friend and I rented near the prison in Green Bay that had a basement, but that was a good twenty years ago. For the last seven years, I have

been living in the attic above my soup shop, a shop with no basement. Considerably more than half of my life has been spent living in homes with *no basements!*

Recently, however, I have found myself in a new home with Mrs. Hen. We bought a house out in the country where our nearest neighbor is a half mile away. It's a rather old house, built in 1930, with many quirky features. By now, you can most likely guess that our new home does indeed have a basement. In the four months we've been living here, we've already started filling up the basement shelves with boxes of odd things we don't want upstairs. The most notably odd aspect to our underground level is that three-fourths of the floor is not concrete but actual exposed rock! One fourth of the space is a conveniently flat poured concrete area for safe storage of the furnace and water heater, but the rest is rough and uneven bedrock. We are certainly on solid ground.

Now this specific sheet of bedrock is a bit of a geological celebrity around the Great Lakes. It's called the Niagara Escarpment. On many East-facing shores of the Great Lakes, you'll see some exposed rocky cliffs and bluffs. These are all examples of the Niagara Escarpment. They're all connected to the rocky ledge of Niagara Falls. If you were to follow this geological formation from my basement floor all the way to the rocky ledge over which Niagara Falls cascades over, you'd notice that they are indeed the same rock! Needless to say, if this particular tectonic plate decides to start moving, my basement will not be the only trouble spot.

My last four months have really been rather busy with the soup shop, but now in November, things start to slow way down. Finally I've found the time to move my crappy drumset from the wellhouse behind my shop down into the most holiest of hideouts, my new basement! Luckily, there's just enough space on the flat concrete area for my audio weapons right between the furnace and the big old rusty oil tank. Once my kit was fully set up and ready to rock in my own basement, it felt like the last twenty years had come full circle. My ramshackle set of drums and I had traveled near and far for a few decades, but now we had really found our home. I sat on my chicken throne and was about to pound out some rhythms, but Mrs. Hen called me upstairs for dinner.

## Dinghole Report #168: Niagara Escarpment Basement Bedrock and Roll!

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #710)

After dinner, Mrs. Hen washed the dishes as I dried them. Then we sat on the couch to relax for about ten minutes before the evening's big concert. When the time came, we both walked downstairs and stood upon the Niagara Escarpment. I turned on my iPod-touch personal device and pulled up my Rhythm Chicken Facebook page. It was time for a surprise internet concert via Facebook live video! The live internet video stream is a new channel for me to send ruckus out into the world. I've played over a payphone from inside a phone booth! I've played over a cell phone from inside my Northwoods trailer! I've played over the Milwaukee radio airwaves from the Ladies bathroom at Club Garibaldi! I've played my record *Live from National Liquor Bar* over the Milwaukee airwaves from the stage at Club Garibaldi! Now, yet again, technology is forcing our percussive hero into new and daring ways to deliver the ruckus!

I sat behind my old crappy drumset, I pulled on my increasingly sad-looking chicken head, and gave Mrs. Hen the signal to start live streaming. She pressed the start button and focused on a set mousetrap where the cement wall meets the floor. I started pounding out the first-ever ruckus in my own new basement! Video of this historic event was instantly blasted out onto the interwebs! A most unsuspecting online crowd was suddenly treated to live video of an old dirty chicken drumming away in his own basement... on the Niagara Escarpment! Not since playing at the La Brea Tar Pits had I felt so at one with the earth! The ruckus was home grown and chaotic as could be!

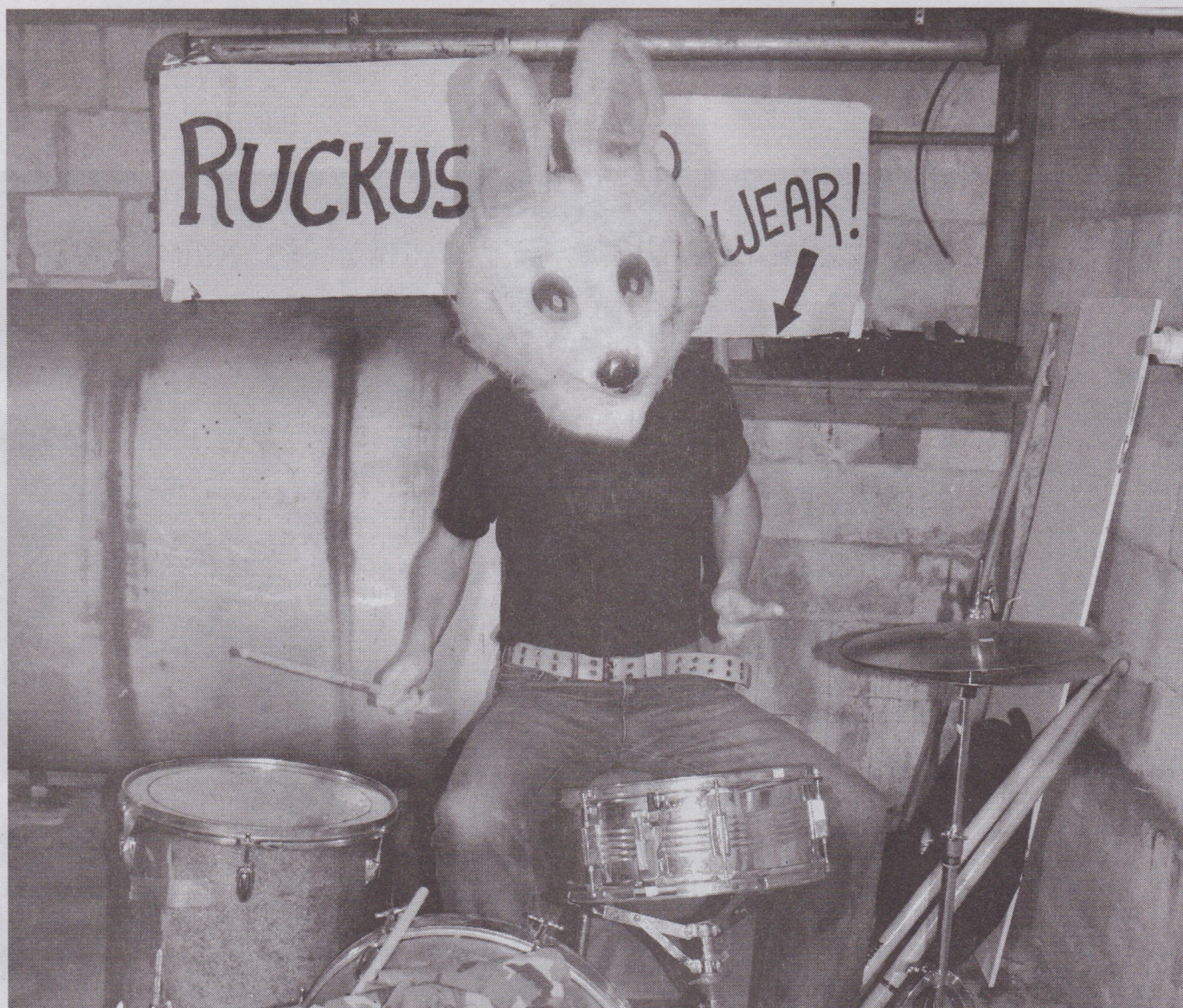
After an action-packed two minutes of live basement punk, I threw the drumsticks down and walked offstage. Concert done, end live feed. Mrs. Hen handed me my Facebook toy and I smiled upon learning that a whole eleven people witnessed the live ruckus in real-time! I went upstairs to take a dump and then we finished watching a movie.

## Dinghole Report #169: Niagara Escarpment Ruckus Revival!

(Rhythm Chicken sighting #711)

When the movie was done, I leaned back on our couch and let out a sigh. Then I looked





KASIA ONISZCZUK

# Not since playing at the La Brea Tar Pits had I felt so at one with the earth!

over to Mrs. Hen and asked, "Well, are you ready for another concert?" Within minutes we were back on the Escarpment with the interwebs at our fingertips! The second live video started again focused on our mousetrap and then led right back into the thunderous ruckus. I can only hope there were maybe at least a *few* unsuspecting folks out there who got to witness *both* live performances in real-time, for it's surprises such as these that really help us enjoy modern technology! To think that just seventeen years ago I was playing in a phone booth over a payphone with a calling card to just *one* audience

member at a time, and now here I was in my own *basement* playing live to maybe eleven people at a time! Progress, it's in our blood!

After maybe thirty or forty seconds into the second online concert of my basement opening night, I threw my conventional little drumsticks aside and reached for the historically seismic Ruckus Logs! As the logs beat down on my ever-crumbling drumset, monstrous vibrations were felt around the Great Lakes region! Rippling thunder was felt around Lake Michigan, and then Lake Superior. Before long, the ruckus were felt in Lake Huron and Lake Erie, all the way

to Buffalo and yes, Niagara Falls! An extra wave of ruckus cascaded over the edge, the same exact rock that can be followed back to my basement. I am now convinced that the next technological boundary for ruckus to conquer will be interstellar and/or interdimensional.

When the evening's second concert was done, Mrs. Hen and I walked upstairs, brushed our teeth, and went to bed. These online tours are hard work.

—Rhythm Chicken





## Chris Boarts Larson Photo Column

Chris Boarts Larson, [www.slugandlettuce.net](http://www.slugandlettuce.net) | [fb.me/slugandlettuce](https://fb.me/slugandlettuce)





2.5 Children Inc. at ABC NO RIO, August 21, 1993

## 2.5 Children Inc. Revolution Begins Within

2.5 Children Inc. are a band not many people outside the Northeast probably know, but the impact on those who did know them was huge. In the early '90s, from the fields of West Chester Pa., the 2.5 kids started coming up to NYC pretty often. They played the Crucial BBQ, the Beer Olympics, and many a time at ABC NO RIO. They were there so often they became a part of the local scene. They were a life-changing band for me.

They were visionaries and revolutionaries—kids who were down with the land and critical of societal norms in a way that was eye-opening. They were fun, silly, and serious. Lyrically, I got down with their love of nature and the land, their fight against development ("Rolling Fields"), and their opposition to being a worker bee on the 44th floor, to being a sheep swallowing the Kool-Aid of medicine, television, or whatever else society expected.

In my mind's eye, 2.5 Children grew out of a meadow or forest and showed up in the city in a jalopy pickup or VW bus with homebrew and homegrown food. They were a breath of fresh air in the truest sense of the DIY ethic. They self-released two full length LPs—*Nonmachinable* and *Courage*—with a few cassettes, demos, and other bits here and there, none of which are easy to find.

They were punk, they were idealistic, they followed no rules, they made their own sound, and they created their own movement—one which wouldn't hurt being revived again today.

—Chris Boarts Larson



# GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

BY OLLIE MIKSE

I LIVED IN HARRISBURG PA FROM 2005-2011 AND AS A PUNK, THE CITY PROVIDED SLIM PICKINGS FOR SHOWS



SO, WHEN THE EVENS CHOSE TO PLAY THE WHITTAKER CENTER DOWNTOWN IT WAS NOTHING SHORT OF A BLESSING

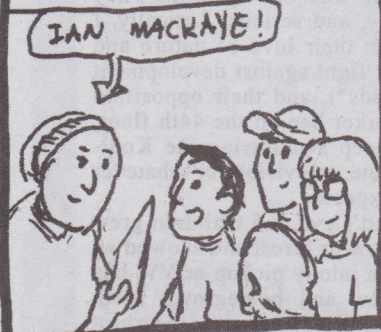


THE EVENS PUT ON A GREAT AND INTIMATE SHOW WHICH I STILL REMEMBER FONDLY TO THIS DAY



THE BAND HUNG OUT AFTER THE SHOW TO SELL RECORDS AND MEET FANS

IAN MACKAYE!



I ASKED IAN MACKAYE TO SIGN MY RECORD AND HE SHOWED ME A TRICK TO OPEN VINYL RECORDS WHICH I STILL USE TO THIS DAY



I LET HIM BORROW MY BLUE SHARPIE TO SIGN MY RECORD

HEY! THIS IS A GREAT SHARPIE



COOL! YOU CAN HAVE IT

AWESOME. THANKS



I DID NOT EXPECT HIM TO TAKE MY SHARPIE AND I WAS NOT READY TO PART WAYS WITH IT

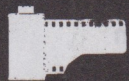
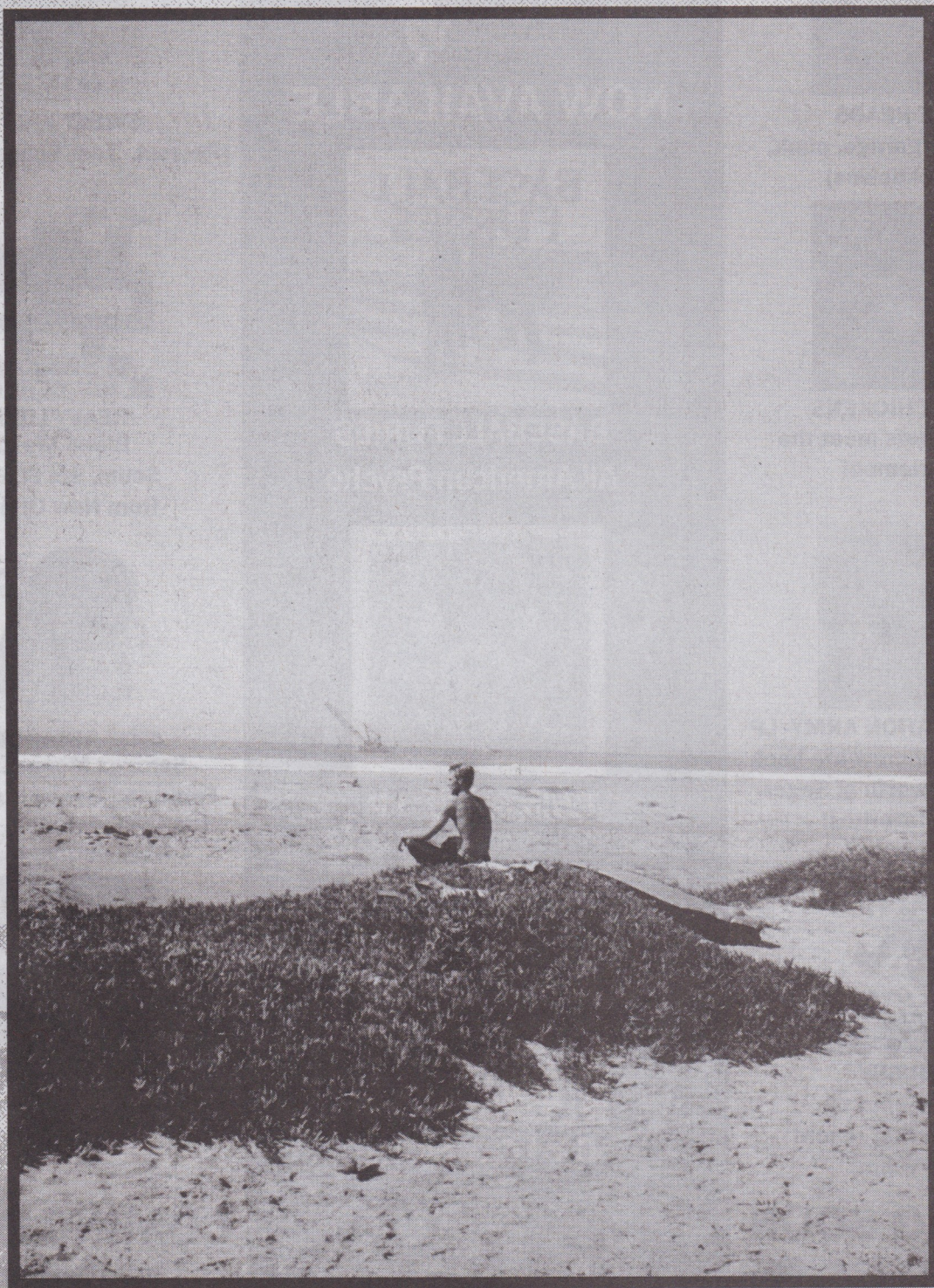


IT'S BEEN ALMOST 10 YEARS AND I STILL THINK ABOUT THAT SHARPIE

I HOPE IT'S HAPPY WHEREVER IT IS







**Dan Monick's Photo Page**  
Morro Bay, Oct. 2018





**FIRE HEADS**  
(Madison, garage, punk,  
smackdowns)



**WOOD CHICKENS**  
Meat Puppets meet the  
Minutemen!



**SEGER LIBERATION ARMY- LP**  
Tom Potter and crew are back  
with an LP's worth of Seger  
System favorites!

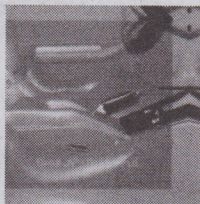


**THE HUSSY**  
I See Just Fine EP  
The Hussy's first record  
in two years!

## COMING SOON



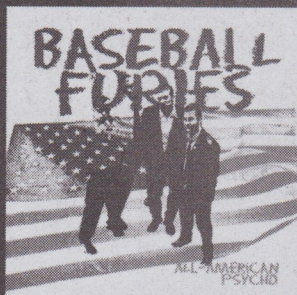
**White Savage**



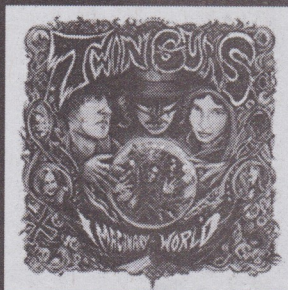
**Sweet JAP**



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All American Psycho



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bigneckrecords.com  
bigneckrecords@usa.net



**SWEET KNIVES**  
(Psssst...Lost Sounds Reboot)



**HEAVY LIDS**  
Bleed Me EP  
Scum, Sci Fi, Punk  
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Scroggz Manor LP/CD  
Featuring Bobby Hussy from  
the Hussy, stoned, garage,  
fuzzed out, punk, rock!



**HEAVY PSYCH ROCK**  
Trio from Dublin,  
Ireland.

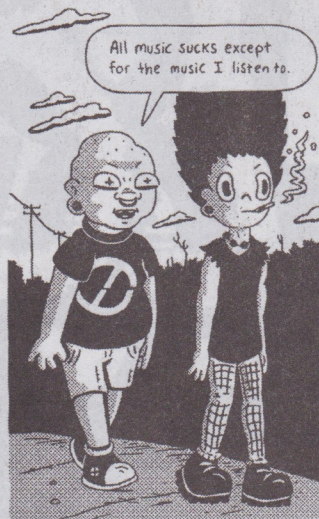
## COMING SOON

Stop Worrying and  
Love the Bomb  
Richard Vain-Ex-Ponys  
Gino and the Goons  
Facility Men  
Wood Chickens

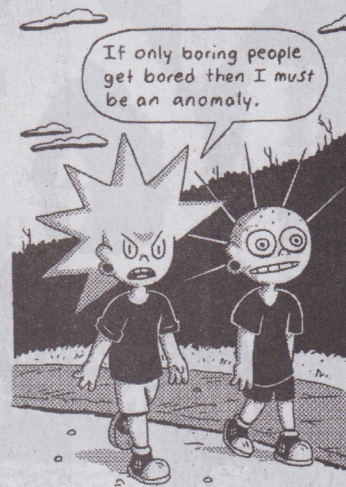




**Existential Deliberation**



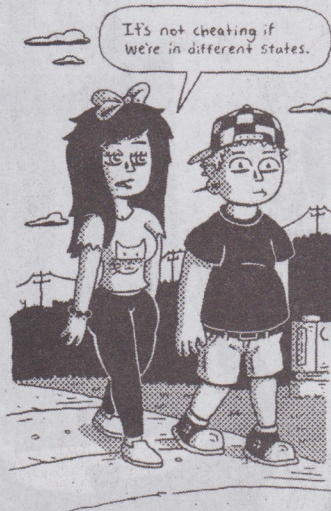
**Profound Epiphany**



**Astute Philosophy**



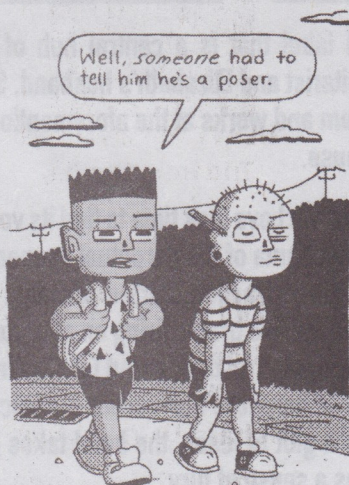
**Unyielding Ideology**



**Grandiose Absurdism**



**Faux Anarchism**



**Misunderstood Altruism**



**Imposing Anti-Intellectualism**



**Unabashed Acquiescence**



# NO LOVE

INTERVIEW BY  
**VINCENT CHUNG**



For the past two decades, the punk windfall in Raleigh, N.C. catalyzed a hotbed of activity: house shows everywhere, an explosion of punker imports, and lots and lots of bands. A few of those acts garnered recognition outside this cluster of sleepy college basketball towns: Double Negative, Whatever Brains, and Davidians.

No Love is a story about five divergent personalities and a cat. All of the band's players have lingered around this prolific punk scene for awhile, enough to warrant some veteran hype upon No Love's advent. Singer Elizabeth Lynch cut her teeth promoting events and DJing at local clubs. Guitarist Daniel Lupton founded and operates Sorry State Records—a punk-

mind record store and label that is a central hub of the scene's infrastructure. Guitarist and Elizabeth's husband, Seth Beard, was in Logic Problem and works at the aforementioned Sorry State. Tobio is the muse.

Hype isn't always a blessing. No Love took time to find its voice, and, for a while, carried the stigma of the perpetual opener for all the good punk shows. Once traction started sticking, the band immediately took off—its five brains firing on all pistons. Five years later, all this culminates on their debut LP, *Choke On It*, a relentlessly potent jolt of hardcore that careens manically without wasting riffs. With a glut of ideas, the band takes lots of chances, but never loses a sense of fury.

**PHOTOS BY MATT BELL, VINCENT CHUNG, CARL GUNHOUSE, DAVID SCHWENTKER**  
LAYOUT BY JESSEE ZEROXED



[Tobio, Daniel and his partner Jet's cat, walks across the coffee table.]

**Elizabeth:** Tobiooooo... this was me and Seth's cat. But Ace (Elizabeth and Seth's cat) beat him up.

**Seth:** You said his name and he flinched.

**Elizabeth:** Sorry, I triggered him.

**Vincent:** How did No Love form and get started?

**Osamu:** I started a band with our first drummer and one of our friends, and then eventually he stopped playing guitar. We just ran into Daniel at a practice space one day and just kind of yelled at him to come play with us.

**Daniel:** As it turns out, it was the last time my previous band was ever in the same room together. We finished up and Dave and Osamu were playing upstairs in the other room. They were like, "You should play with us" and I was like, "Okay," so I just learned whatever song they were working on. And then my other band just never played again.

**Osamu:** And how did Seth and Elizabeth join?

**Daniel:** I think Seth came in first, right?

**Seth:** Yeah. And then I suggested Elizabeth.

**Elizabeth:** Seth was like "Hey, you want to sing for this band?" And I was like, "Yeah, okay."

**Osamu:** It was a lot of running into each other in the halls at the practice space and things like that. We were looking for someone else to get in the band and it just kind of happened.

**Daniel:** I'd met Osamu briefly as this dude who lived down the street from me. He's super into Japanese hardcore and it's like, "Why was I not friends with this person before?"

**Elizabeth:** Because you're both awkward.

**Vincent:** How did Chris get involved?

**Elizabeth:** Dave quit because he had two babies, and then we had to find another drummer. There was a series of very difficult trials and tasks that Chris had to do. We set up an obstacle course.

**Chris:** Hazing.

**Vincent:** You had to fight with a giant Q-tip like *American Gladiators*?

**Elizabeth:** Have you ever seen *Wayne's World*?

**Chris:** I had to dip my drumsticks in butane and light them on fire and play. That was the hardest one.

**Vincent:** [To Elizabeth] So when Seth asked you to join the band, it sounded like you had some reservations.

**Elizabeth:** Well, he was like, "It's a pop punk band." And I was like, "Ehhhhh..." And then I listened to it and I was like, "This isn't that bad. This isn't what I thought you meant when you said pop punk."

**Daniel:** But it was closer to pop punk than we are now.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. It was definitely poppier than now. The first song I learned was—Osamu wrote the lyrics—and it was about *Mystery Science Theater*.

**Seth:** Good fan theory, though.

**Elizabeth:** It was like really good fan fic.

**Vincent:** That song does not exist?

**Osamu:** It's on the first tape.

**Elizabeth:** Nope, gone forever!

**Daniel:** We took it off our Bandcamp.

**Vincent:** You should do a remix and have people comment on top of it.

**Elizabeth:** Yes!

**Daniel:** That's a good idea actually.

**Seth:** We should just get Drugcharge to play over the top.

**Daniel:** Oh my god! Have them do commentary over it?

**Vincent:** [to Elizabeth] So the reservations weren't based in that you hadn't sung for any bands?

**Elizabeth:** No Love is my first band. I've sang in a cover band before.

**Seth:** Which is the first thing I did guitar in also—cover bands for Halloween. No Love was the first band I played guitar in.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, I organized a Halloween cover show for two years, where everyone just formed bands of their favorite bands. Me and Seth did Bikini Kill and he also did Discharge with someone. I also did Weezer. And then the next year we did B-52's, which was a lot of fun.

**Daniel:** Those cover shows were great. I did Poison Idea and Descendents. Abuse did Bastard. That was crushing.

**Vincent:** Wow. Wanna go back to the pop punk thing? Because when I first saw No Love, I never saw a pop punk vibe. The new record is definitely very far from pop punk.

**Elizabeth:** Thank you.

**Vincent:** Then y'all have this conscious decision to not use pop punk in the description, so people migrated toward "melodic." And even I don't think it's all that melodic.

**Elizabeth:** It's not like d-beat. And it's not super rock'n'roll. It's harder to put into a description what we are. Or pin down.

**Seth:** I see "jagged edges" used a lot.

**Chris:** "Angular."

**Daniel:** Every band I've ever played guitar in has been described as "angular."

**Vincent:** Music critics love using that term.

**Daniel:** I think it just means I don't know what I'm doing on guitar, so the stuff I do doesn't make musical sense.

**Chris:** I think maybe it means in solos or structure of rhythm guitar, there's not like swingy notes or slides.

**Vincent:** But the band has roots in pop punk?

**Osamu:** Dave and I started it like that. It was just something fun to do at the time.

**Daniel:** Screeching Weasel was our first cover.

**Vincent:** Okay, so obviously the sound has progressed. Daniel has admitted that it took the band a while to find its footing.

**Elizabeth:** Oh yeah.

**Vincent:** I noticed that seeing No Love live, it was very straightforward punk. I expected something a little more interesting. That turnaround moment, for me, was when you opened for Earth Girls at Prisma. I remember turning to Spencer Hitchins, mid-set, and was like, "What happened to this band?" Something was gelling with the guitars, and from there it was forward momentum until you've got this very robust sound that you have now. What was the sound you were going for? What did you change?

**Seth:** I think just getting more experience playing guitar over the years. This is still the first band I've played guitar in, ever. I didn't know much going into it. Now, I feel more confident and also I just wanted to play more hardcore songs so I slowly started writing more hardcore riffs and songs. I think Daniel did also. We were slowly trying to get away from the pop punk thing. I don't think we had anything in mind.

**Daniel:** I remember a big turning point for me was when I wrote that song "Hey Larry," and what's the one about cops?

**Seth:** "SCAB." Very misunderstood song also.

**Daniel:** I wrote both of those songs on the same day. I demoed them out, played all of the instruments on the demo, did vocals, and everything. I don't think we changed a whole lot in them. I wrote "Hey Larry" because I realized Screeching Weasel had these hardcore songs that were full of pop culture references and I was trying to emulate that. I brought it to the band like, "Hey, this is a thing we can do." We did and it sounded good and I was like "Oh, we can play fast." And then it was just like "explosion!" the gates are open.

**Seth:** That was our first really straight up hardcore song.

**Daniel:** I wouldn't have brought a song like "Choke on It" to the band without "Hey Larry" to break that open for us.

**Elizabeth:** That was a good song.

**Osamu:** I think we also started to write together more.

**Vincent:** Do you think it was a tightening of the band chemistry?

**Osamu:** Yeah, and I don't know it was necessarily a specific direction we were going in, but the interaction.

**Elizabeth:** I think we stopped going in a specific direction.

**Vincent:** Did you ever have a specific direction?

**Elizabeth:** I think because there were no poppy bands at the time in the scene.

**Daniel:** Not only were there not poppy bands, but I was not interested in hardcore when we started.

**Seth:** Same. I was listening to a little less, too.

**Daniel:** And the scene was very uncool. There was this crop of kids who were super into straight edge, New York hardcore, and being hard. These kids were my friends, and I played with bands with some of them even, but I was just like, "This is uncool."

**Seth:** That shit is pretty lame.

**Daniel:** I did not want to be in a hardcore band at that time. I remember being very clear about that. Then once we started playing hardcore, I was like, "This is fucking cool. I love hardcore."

**Elizabeth:** "Oh yeah, I forgot. I love this!"

**Osamu:** We definitely have a different vibe from all of those bands and kids, because they were so much more straightforward and aggressive.

**Daniel:** And they all moved away. Then, all of a sudden, there were not a lot of cool hardcore bands.

**Elizabeth:** And you were like, "Oops." But now the scene is sick.



**Daniel:** I remember, too—Elizabeth responded to the fast stuff.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, I had a hard time writing lyrics to poppy stuff. There are a few songs I never wrote lyrics for and so we never played. I just picked and chose which ones, and it was easier for the hardcore ones.

**Osamu:** At the first show we played, I specifically remember Elizabeth sat next to me at the bar and said to me, "Can we not be a pop punk band?"

**Seth:** Also, there was a fight at that show.

**Osamu:** Yeah, there was!

**Seth:** One of the aggressive people punched a girl in the face.

**Daniel:** Kicked a girl in the face.

**Elizabeth:** Good times.

**Vincent:** When you talk about writing lyrics for the pop punk stuff versus the hardcore stuff, does the content change?

**Elizabeth:** Not really, because the way I write lyrics is that I just think of lines throughout, whenever;—when I'm driving or at my house—and I'll write it down. When I'm like, "Oh fuck, I have to write some lyrics," I take the lines that make sense together and try to fit them together, then try to fit them to a certain song.

**Vincent:** Not the Screeching Weasel tactic of, you hear a song and think, "This one's going to be about Jughead and Veronica."

**Daniel:** That's what "Hey Larry" was, though. I wrote all of the lyrics to that and I was like, "I'm going to write a song about *Curb Your Enthusiasm*."

**Vincent:** I thought it was *Perfect Strangers*.

**Daniel:** No!

[Tobio the cat jumps onto the top of Daniel's front door.]

**Daniel:** Majestic beast!

**Seth:** Should we take a picture to include in the article?

**Elizabeth:** You agile bitch! That's what people call me. Just kidding.

**Osamu:** How does he even get up there?

**Daniel:** There's a bookshelf he jumps on.

**Vincent:** I thought he jumped straight from the floor.

**Osamu:** Eight-foot vertical leap.

**Seth:** He's a tall cat. He likes being up high.

**Vincent:** So, those of you who I know personally, it seems like you have pretty—not completely—divergent tastes in music.

**Daniel:** There are common threads though. We all love Japanese hardcore.

**Osamu:** The *Xanadu* soundtrack.

**Elizabeth:** Stop!

**Seth:** That's just you. That line just stops.

**Elizabeth:** Osamu makes us listen to the *Xanadu* soundtrack at least three times per practice.

**Vincent:** I thought it was universally beloved?

**Osamu:** So, Japanese hardcore.

**Elizabeth:** There's '77 punk. *Killed by Death* stuff.

**Daniel:** Probably stuff like Zero Boys, right?

**Everyone:** Yeah.



CARL GUNHOUSE

IF YOU'VE GOT A MOM WHO CARES ABO

NO



# LOVE



UT YOU, THAT'S PRETTY FUCKING DOPE.

**Seth:** Some of the more melodic U.S. hardcore.

**Daniel:** What would be bands we could all get behind?

**Osamu:** Marked Men?

**Elizabeth:** Nog Watt?

**Chris:** I definitely fell in love with Wire when I heard it.

**Daniel:** That's my favorite record.

**Osamu:** We covered Wire.

**Chris:** "Dot Dash."

**Daniel:** The Japanese hardcore thing is weirdly important. I feel like you hear it in... maybe no one else would be able to point to it, but there are lots of spots where I could say...

**Elizabeth:** Like little surprises.

**Chris:** Transitions.

**Seth:** What's the song on the LP? Da na nanana...

**Daniel:** "Open Mouth."

**Seth:** "Open Mouth" was inspired heavily by listening to Burning Spirits hardcore.

**Osamu:** Especially that solo at the end.

**Vincent:** The solos are—I get a Death Side vibe because they're like marathons.

**Daniel:** Yeah, I wanted to play music like that.

**Seth:** I've never felt competent enough.

**Daniel and Osamu:** Me neither.

**Daniel:** Devour had this one song with a really long solo and I always thought it sounded super busted—even though it used to sound even worse—but I rewrote it. [Everyone laughs.]

**Elizabeth:** You're doing great. Killing it.

**Vincent:** So let's talk about the process of writing *Choke on It*. One of the most impressive feats about the record is how tightly dense it is. It's just over twenty minutes, but there's so much in the record. I feel like the economy to it seems intentional.

**Osamu:** Absolutely.

**Vincent:** Is that you guys challenging each other? Or trying to push the envelope?

**Osamu:** It's definitely us challenging each other.

**Vincent:** Are you saying "That parts sucks, cut it out?"

**Osamu:** Not that directly, but saying, "We don't need to play this four times. We can do it twice."

**Daniel:** A lot of it is we almost always write music before the vocals. I remember reading that about Koro, that's how they did their songs. They came up with all of the music and then—we play songs at practice for months and months sometimes before we have lyrics, so the song has to be exciting all the way through. In my other bands, we'll often say, "Let's play this riff six times, because it'll be two times without vocals and four with." No Love never leaves space for the vocals at all. We write a whole instrumental song and then the vocals have to find a space within that. Is that wrong?



AT THE FIRST SHOW WE PLAYED,  
I SPECIFICALLY REMEMBER  
ELIZABETH SAT NEXT TO ME  
AT THE BAR AND SAID TO ME,  
"CAN WE NOT BE A  
POP PUNK BAND?"





**Seth:** That's giving me more credit than I probably deserve, because I just write riffs and whatever.

**Daniel:** When we're putting it together, it's all exciting all the time. We hardly have any parts where we lay back or quiet down and build up. We're up all the time.

**Vincent:** Do you edit out a lot?

**Daniel:** Yes. We have tons of songs that we just threw out.

**Vincent:** Do you have plans to do another record, with the loosest noodly-est punk rock that didn't make it?

**Seth:** We almost have another whole album written already.

**Daniel:** And we've probably thrown out enough songs for another album.

**Vincent:** So when you're editing, is it a pretty democratic approach?

**Seth:** Usually it's kind of easy to tell when we're writing a song and it's hitting a dead end where no one is really feeling it. Sometimes it'll get put on the back burner, and usually it gets forgotten about and not picked back up. We have so many people writing songs in the band that it's never a problem having new songs.

**Elizabeth:** Everyone writes songs except me.

**Vincent:** To give a sense of scale, by estimation: how many songs do you have, even half-written songs?

**Daniel:** Seven or eight that we haven't recorded? That's counting the two on the (upcoming Sorry State Records) compilation.

**Seth:** I know I have more riffs and stuff.

**Daniel:** The voice memos thing on my phone is just full of riffs. Always.

**Elizabeth:** Fuck. Really, it's me that's holding everything up, because I need to write lyrics. I have a bunch of lyrics; I just need to put them to the songs.

**Daniel:** It's hard. I try and can't really do it.

**Seth:** There's so much stuff going on. At some point when I got more comfortable with the guitar, I wanted to not play power chords anymore, so I just stopped.

**Daniel:** We can because Osamu is a really good bass player—he can hold down the whole rhythm and we can just go nuts.

**Osamu:** I just zone out and listen to them noodle.

**Vincent:** Is noodly the new angular?

**Daniel:** I'm angular and Seth's noodly.

**Chris:** Seth's the opposite.

**Seth:** I don't actually write solos, I just feel them. I don't know how to play them and I just noodle.

**Daniel:** I can't noodle. It's not in my nature.

**Vincent:** It's not a very noodly style.

**Daniel:** If you listen to Seth's guitar on Number Two... what's it called?

**Elizabeth:** "Survival Instinct."

**Daniel:** It's noodly as fuck.

**Vincent:** But there's a fury to it. Noodling is just going nowhere, meandering.

**Seth:** It's a very loose theory.

**Daniel:** Seth does a thing that he does... he noodles for a minute—and it's like the pot boils over and "waaaaa!"—and it turns to chaos. It's awesome.

**Osamu:** He also has the most interesting parts that you don't notice for months and

then you'll hear something he's playing forever and think, "Man, that's amazing."

**Elizabeth:** Damn, that's a spicy meatball!

**Seth:** You're making me blush.

**Vincent:** Let's talk about Raleigh.

**Elizabeth:** I like Raleigh.

**Vincent:** Lately, at shows, I'll hear someone make an off comment, like, "Raleigh sucks so bad," and I just immediately think, "Stop. Y'all have it so good here." When I moved away in 2001, there was a lot of straight edge metalcore like Prayer For Cleansing.

**Seth:** I grew up around all of that in Charlotte. I think a couple of those guys ended up playing in Between The Buried And Me.

**Vincent:** So, I move back, and Raleigh has this very prolific and interesting scene. What are some of your favorites?

**Chris:** Any band on the comp.

**Elizabeth:** The look in Daniel's eyes intensifies.

**Daniel:** We're putting out this comp on Sorry State Records of North Carolina bands. It's nineteen bands and they all rip. It's the definitive list. (The compilation will include: Cammo, Concussion, Crete, Das Drip, Davidians, DE(JT), Drugcharge, Essex Muro, Fitness Womxn, ISS, Mind Dweller, Natural Causes, No Love, Oxidant, Public Acid, Scarecrow, Silica, Skemäta, and Vitna.)

**Elizabeth:** Raleigh has a lot of really good bands now. Scarecrow, Drugcharge, Das Drip...

**Daniel:** Vitna.

**Elizabeth:** I don't know if you would count ISS because they're not a band and they won't play shows.

**Seth:** They're the best studio group in Raleigh.

**Osamu:** All of the Greensboro bands, like Public Acid.

**Daniel:** Oh yeah. Mind Dweller rips.

**Seth:** One of my favorites broke up, Fitness Womxn.

**Daniel:** Did they break up?

**Seth:** Sadly, I think they're on hiatus since the bass player lives in New York now.

**Vincent:** That's a shame.

**Daniel:** They're the best band on the comp.

**Seth:** They're just... too good.

**Elizabeth:** So the scene is really good right now. There have been a lot more young kids coming to shows, which is cool. For awhile it was just all the same old people.

**Seth:** All of the bars around here suck to play in.

**Elizabeth:** Because downtown Raleigh...

**Seth:** Is fucking gross.

**Elizabeth:** It's a nightmare now because everything is so expensive and there are condos going up everywhere.

**Seth:** Fucking Bird scooters.

**Elizabeth:** Bros on Bird scooters!

**Seth:** Fake Alts on Lime bikes!

**Vincent:** I feel like this is a new song.

**Seth:** When I first moved to Raleigh eight or nine years ago, I used to go downtown and after 6PM and it was dead. You wouldn't see anybody out, anywhere. Now, it's just too much.

[Tobio walks across the recorder. Daniel gets up to check on it.]

**Elizabeth:** Did he stop it?

**Daniel:** No. It's like the Apple TV remote. He seeks it out and wants to pause what we're watching.

**Vincent:** He wants to be human.

[Tobio steals Daniel's chair.]

**Seth:** That's why he did that, he wanted to steal your chair. It's an elaborate ploy.

**Elizabeth:** He's not that smart. He's so dumb.

**Seth:** I've seen him open a round doorknob before.

**Daniel:** He's smart when it comes to food.

**Vincent:** The Bunker, it's been going for a couple of years now. That's a pretty long run for a punk house.

**Osamu:** It switched sides, right?

**Seth:** It used to be on the other side, and then they moved it to the basement. It's great because... I don't know. It has a weird, different vibe from the old days of GSS houses. But I'm kind of more into it since it's less of a... it's like a party but not like a shitty, weird party.

**Daniel:** Yeah, I feel like it's almost like weirdly hippie-ish in a way. People are into community, and a bunch of them are vegan.

**Chris:** They always cook meals.

**Elizabeth:** Whereas at GSS they had porn all over the doors.

**Daniel:** GSS was just like "Party! We are fucking wasted, we are going to destroy this place and it's going to be sick."

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, "We got a pool table, hardwood floors we never clean, and people sleep on them. Shoot fireworks off in the basement."

**Vincent:** So GSS was a previous house that did shows?

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, there were two of them. Like early/mid-'00s?

**Seth:** I still lived in Charlotte at the time when the first GSS house was going. Me and my friend Nick would drive up all of the time to go see shows at that house. I remember we went one year on New Year's Eve and it was Government Warning, Cross Laws (Daniel's old band), and maybe that XbrainiaX band also played? I remember going to that show and we never had anything like that in Charlotte. It was such a blast and everyone was so sweaty and having a really good time. Government Warning were great. That kind of solidified moving up here for me.

**Daniel:** That place was just wide open.

**Elizabeth:** It was dope.

**Daniel:** It was just, "Get fucking wasted, play as hard as you can, and go crazy."

**Seth:** Because you'd be down there playing and drenched.

**Elizabeth:** I think I have a few old pictures of it; a show where everyone was packed in and no one could move. The ceiling was so low.

**Daniel:** That's when the clapping on the ceiling thing started. That's a Raleigh thing.

**Elizabeth:** Do people not do that at other places?

**Seth:** I saw Annihilation Time there and that was insane. They rolled up and we joked about how they would open their van and weed smoke would just pour out. But they opened their van door and smoke poured out because they had been shooting fireworks in



the van. I think they were shooting them off during the show.

**Elizabeth:** Acid Reflux was doing that too. They were shooting off fireworks in the basement.

**Seth:** And then everyone moved out of there and they moved in next door and started GSS2. Which was kind of a younger crowd.

**Elizabeth:** I liked the second GSS house better.

**Seth:** Yeah, it was good. They did too much after a while and any shitty show happened there. It took a little bit out of the vibe there.

**Vincent:** How is the Bunker different?

**Elizabeth:** I remember being sixteen going to the first GSS house and this wasted girl is like, "You want a beer?" and I was like, "Yeah, I do. I'm sixteen." I didn't say that. I went to get another one and she was like, "What the fuck are you doing?" People were not as nice. Maybe it's just because I was young and nobody likes young people. The Bunker is more friendly.

**Osamu:** There's more community.

**Seth:** Everyone there is a little older than at some of the other punk houses, which are more like college people.

**Elizabeth:** They're also anarchists and stuff. You know, more political than just a party house.

**Osamu:** There's still a party atmosphere.

**Seth:** Every time I see Usman come in the store he's always carrying a beer.

**Chris:** There's also the different people that book shows at the Bunker. William (Saenz) does most of the metal and powerviolence shows.

**Elizabeth:** I feel like the Bunker is really a central piece of the scene.

**Seth:** It doesn't mean to be insular, but there's a core.

**Daniel:** And I think every band on the comp, except for ISS, has played The Bunker.

**Elizabeth:** Because ISS don't play shows.

**Daniel:** That was my guiding principle for what bands should be on it. Who was kind of outside the circle or whatever. Because there are bands I like that we didn't ask to be on the comp. It's not because I think they suck.

**Elizabeth:** The Bunker's like a big family.

**Everyone:** Yeah.

**Daniel:** They host people's birthday parties.

**Elizabeth:** I threw Seth a surprise party there. We threw Red a camo-themed birthday party there.

**Chris:** I got a haircut there.

**Elizabeth:** I gave Grubbs a haircut there. And Nicole. I gave Nicole a Chelsea and then we blew all of the hair off of her with a leaf blower. [Everyone laughs]

**Vincent:** Is it you giving everyone mullets?

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. I've cut Red's mullet, Grubbs, Seth, I'll do yours next when you grow your hair out.

**Daniel:** Mullets are a Raleigh thing too. When we played in Richmond, some of my friends were like, "What's up with the fucking mullets?"

**Vincent:** A friend of mine said that, too, at the Bat Fangs show.

**Elizabeth:** All of my friends have mullets.

**Seth:** I didn't choose mine. It was bestowed upon me. My friend Jenny gave me a Euro mullet.

**Vincent:** What's a Euro mullet?

**Seth:** I don't know... I don't actually know.

**Elizabeth:** It's like, almost like a Chelsea mullet.

**Chris:** Chelsea—you gotta have these things [motions sideburns].

**Elizabeth:** And you gotta have the neck beard, like a behind-the-head neck beard

**Seth:** I will say I've had worse haircuts. I did shave the top of my head that time.

**Elizabeth:** I did give him a monk haircut.

**Seth:** For The Monks cover band.

**Vincent:** I remember that. For The Great Cover-Up. (An annual four-day fest of cover bands at Raleigh's Kings Barcade.)

**Elizabeth:** So, basically, if you want a fucked-up haircut that you have no expectations of, come to me. I'll do it at the Bunker.

**Vincent:** Okay, so besides music, I think it's safe to say you're all a bunch of nerds.

**Everyone:** Yes.

**Vincent:** Or connoisseurs. But even outside of hardcore and punk, I know y'all have vast interests. [To Osamu] Every time I talk to you, we have these really interesting tangents that our conversations go in. So what are you guys into when you're not listening to punk records?

**Seth:** I love Dungeons & Dragons. Like loooove D&D.

**Elizabeth:** He listens to D&D podcasts.

**Seth:** Because I don't play a lot as it really doesn't fit into my schedule.

**Vincent:** The games are long too.

**Seth:** Usually when I play with people, we play from 6 PM until midnight. It kind of interested

me when I was growing up, but I didn't have a lot of friends, much less enough friends to play. One of my coworkers eventually got me into it. We started doing that and I kind of fell in love with it and really love role playing games.

**Osamu:** Anime has been something I've been into since I was very small. I like a lot of fantasy. Seth and I talk a lot about fantasy.

**Seth:** I read a lot of fantasy books, too. Which might have fueled my love for D&D also.

**Daniel:** We talk about TV all the time.

**Elizabeth:** TV is dope.

**Seth:** I don't watch a lot of TV.

**Daniel:** I don't either, but we always talk about what shows we're watching.

**Osamu:** I watch a lot of TV. I'm a big nerd about Japanese culture stuff. I just like giant robots. When I was younger I was exposed to it through my family in Japan. They'd send us toys and things like that. It wasn't really available in Wilmington unless you went to very specialty stores and paid sixty dollars for one VHS.

**Chris:** Probably the biggest hobby thing I've been into the last two years has been birding.

**Elizabeth:** What did you just say?

**Chris:** Binoculars, take a field guide...

**Seth:** Bird watching?

**Elizabeth:** No, birding!

**Chris:** Yeah, birding.

**Seth:** Is that the official term for it?

**Osamu:** That's awesome, I didn't know that.

**Elizabeth:** You ever see a tit mouse? [Everyone laughs.]

**Chris:** Yeah, they're on my porch every day.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, I used to love watching birds and I had a book and I was like, "Haha, tit mouse."

**Chris:** Yeah, tufted tit mouse.

**Osamu:** I'm glad we turned that around real quick.

**Chris:** They're beautiful birds but their call is like, "Arrghh!"

**Vincent:** How long have you been doing that?

**Chris:** About two years. I got this super extensive field guide.

**Osamu:** You also grew up in the mountains right?

**Chris:** Yeah, and I was a Boy Scout for ten years.

**Vincent:** And I'm assuming that North Carolina is a real fertile place for birding?

**Chris:** The biodiversity here is crazy. It's really high compared to other places. I like to sight read piano sheet music.

I WAS LIKE "OH, WE CAN PLAY FAST."  
AND THEN IT WAS JUST LIKE  
"EXPLOSION!!!" THE GATES ARE OPEN.





**Vincent:** Pulling out a random sheet and just...

**Chris:** Yeah, I have a giant box of all of my old collections of different composers and I'll pull an old thing out and try to learn it because it keeps my brain active and feeling good.

**Elizabeth:** I love anime, *Doctor Who*...

**Daniel:** [to Elizabeth] You're the queen of K-Pop.

**Elizabeth:** Bitch, I'm *getting there!*

**Daniel:** You're building up to it.

**Seth:** I was like, is she trying to gloss over this?

**Osamu:** There's no way we would let that get by.

**Elizabeth:** Okay, I love K-Pop and I'm a K-Pop DJ. That's my secret alter ego.

**Osamu:** And showing us videos of K-Pop.

**Elizabeth:** And making the band watch K-Pop videos but they're so well done.

**Vincent:** It's not just K-Pop but Korean pop culture.

**Elizabeth:** I love K-dramas also because they're like live action Shoji anime.

**Vincent:** Is that what "Drama Fever" is about?

**Elizabeth:** Absolutely.

**Vincent:** I'm glad I did not interpret that song wrong.

**Elizabeth:** Drama Fever is literally the app that I use to watch my K-dramas. So that song is based off of my love of terrible Shoji anime and K-dramas. Because they are awful.

**Vincent:** From the lyrics, it could be more than K-dramas.

**Elizabeth:** It's about any bad TV.

**Vincent:** What I call modern trash culture.

**Elizabeth:** Absolutely. For me, it was inspired by Shoji anime, specifically.

**Vincent:** Reality TV?

**Elizabeth:** I don't watch that much reality TV. The only reality TV I've ever watched are Japanese reality shows or Korean reality shows.

**Osamu:** *Terrace House*?

**Elizabeth:** Yes, bitch! *Terrace House*! The cultures are slightly different...

**Daniel:** How are they different from American reality shows?

**Elizabeth:** They're so much nicer. I watched this one Korean reality show called *Roommates* about all of these different K-Pop idols, two actresses, one actor, and a few comedians. It's just about their lives living together and being friends and loving each other. They are so nice together.

**Vincent:** I feel like the crux of reality shows is conflict, though?

**Elizabeth:** It isn't. *Roommates* was really funny. In one episode Jackson goes and he's like, "For my birthday I want to swim with dolphins." And they're like, "We can't do that." Then he's like, "I want a pet donkey." So they rented a donkey for the weekend to

live at their house. That kind of stuff. It was so funny.

**Seth:** It definitely is a little more wholesome.

**Vincent:** [to Elizabeth] Was it you trying to do a *Desperate Housewives* of punk?

**Elizabeth:** Me and Sarah were trying to do *Real Housepunks of Bunker!* A Bunker-themed *Real Housewives* YouTube show. We're never going to do it, but we wanted to. You can leave all of that out if you want to.

**Daniel:** I kind of do punk all of the time.

**Seth:** You read a lot.

**Daniel:** I do like books.

**Elizabeth:** But he reads about punk.

**Daniel:** I read about all kinds of things.

**Vincent:** A couple of weeks ago, we were talking, and you were on this tear about evolutionary...

**Daniel:** Yeah, paleoanthropology.

**Elizabeth:**

Wow.

**Daniel:** Yeah, I just realized you can read about anything. It's crazy. [Elizabeth laughs.] Right now I'm reading a textbook on retail management because I've owned a store for five years and I thought I should maybe learn about what the fuck you're supposed to do. I'm reading *Neuromancer*, because I haven't read a lot of classic sci-fi.

**Osamu:** Good one.

**Seth:** I don't know, man.

**Osamu:** Really?



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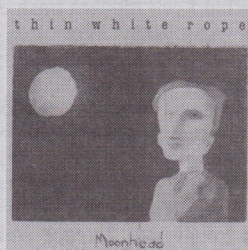
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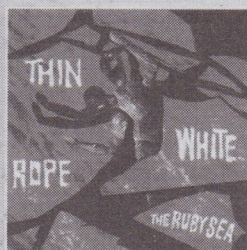


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**Daniel:** It's hard to read. It's so jargon-y and literally hard to follow. Then I read all of these paleoanthropology books, just sort of realizing that we're all apes. I never really thought about that before.

**Osamu:** I feel like a real asshole for talking about anime now.

**Elizabeth:** I know!

**Seth:** I talked about role playing games.

**Elizabeth:** Because Daniel's all like, "What's up? I'm really smart."

**Daniel:** I read fantasy stuff, too. I was an English professor for years, and I recently quit. Books were always my career and punk was my hobby; now it's switched. I listen to records, place orders for the store, and think about punk all day, so at night when I stop doing that, all I want to do is read books.

**Vincent:** So, you do admit that you do stop thinking about punk at some point during the day?

**Daniel:** Yeah.

**Seth:** Every once in a while. Though the book I've been reading is the *Flex* discography of Japanese hardcore.

**Daniel:** I'm reading that too. I've read literally every book about punk I can find.

**Vincent:** You do the store, you do the label. When you're running a small business, it kind of consumes you—you're thinking about it all hours of the night. There comes to be a point where you just come home and you're just kind of happy to put it aside for a bit. Like, turn it off and watch some TV.

**Daniel:** Yeah, I don't really like watching TV. Most of the time I don't find it a gratifying

experience, even though I do it all the time. Jet and I get in fights about it all of the time. She's always like, "Can we watch one more?" I'm like, "No, we've watched TV for an hour, that's my maximum per day." [Elizabeth gasps, everyone laughs.]

**Elizabeth:** One hour is one K-drama. That's one episode! I'm like, "All right, one more," four hours later.

**Daniel:** I really like reading the *Atlantic Monthly*. I'll read about something in that and think, "Oh, that sounds interesting," and then read some other books about that. I like learning things. It's fun.

**Seth:** I love learning things, too. I've come to the realization that I can teach myself to do pretty much anything I want to do, especially with YouTube. I can fix almost anything on a car with the right tools. If I can watch someone do it, I can replicate that.

**Chris:** Yeah I taught myself how to tune pianos with YouTube, just watching videos.

**Vincent:** Wait, Seth, you haven't talked about your solo project, Sean Moustache.

**Seth:** Yeah, because it's not really a thing. I occasionally play solo shows doing electronic music. That's another thing I like, synths. I've been learning how to build them and work on them. It's a weird thing. When I'm alone and do it, it's a really nice anxiety-relief kind of thing. Then I have the idea to play shows, and it's all stress and anxiety. But it's a high doing it, because I like to improv a lot when I play live. It's always a cool thing when it's done and I feel good about it. Except when everything breaks.

**Elizabeth:** Something always breaks.

**Seth:** I'm working on compiling some stuff together and maybe releasing it.

**Vincent:** Let's circle back to interpreting "Drama Fever." I'm glad I got that right, as I know you wanted to set the record straight on "Dogs//Wolves" from another review. You all also seem to be a little chagrined about that song, despite everyone loving it.

**Seth:** I think we haven't played it in a long time. I feel weird because it was very early in me learning how to play a guitar. It's odd how everyone gravitates to that song. If they're going to mention a song title, it's usually that.

**Chris:** I'd like to make a stab at maybe—what kinds of people who say that's their favorite? Maybe it's like the 88.1, WKNC (NC State's college radio station) people.

**Vincent:** A little more radio friendly.

**Chris:** Yes, more radio friendly, like da na na na na na na na.

**Daniel:** It has a real pop structure: verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, chorus.

**Seth:** I don't think I could write anything else at that point.

**Daniel:** I don't know how it got past us and we didn't second guess it and fuck it up. Because that's what we usually do. "Oh no, we can't do that."

**Elizabeth:** It was very early on. How long ago did we write that? Two, three years?

**Daniel:** I feel like it's the first song we wrote after the demo.

**Vincent:** Elizabeth told me she wasn't super happy with the lyrics.

**Elizabeth:** I wasn't super happy with the lyrics.

**Daniel:** What don't you like about it?

**Elizabeth:** I don't know.

**Daniel:** I think that song's really clever.

**Vincent:** You had issues with how it was interpreted in the Bandcamp Best Punk of July 2018 piece, right?

**Osamu:** It's about you just hating people, right?

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, she (the author) was like, "This song... blah blah blah about an ex-lover." I would never ever care about an ex that much to write a song about them. I'm embarrassed that this person thought that I did. It's about a friend. I care about my friends. A friend that hurt me. I don't give a fuck about an ex who hurt me.

**Seth:** They got nothing right.

**Daniel:** My favorite part about that is just imagining you saying the word "lover."

[Everyone says the word "lover" in silly voices for about thirty seconds.]

**Vincent:** Reviewers think "Dogs//Wolves" is the clear favorite.

**Elizabeth:** Which is... I don't know. That really does seem to be the one that everyone mentions.

**Seth:** We don't even play it anymore.

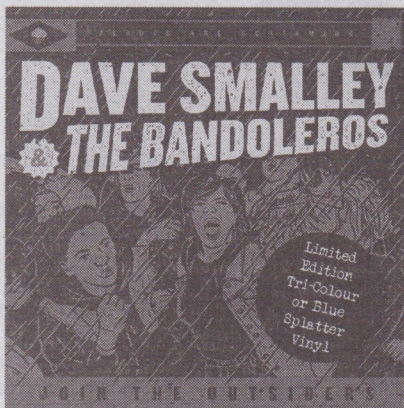
**Daniel:** It has a good riff though.

**Seth:** That was one of the first songs I wrote.

**Osamu:** I'm pretty proud of that bass line.

IT'S NOODLY AS FUCK.  
BUT THERES A FURY TO IT.  
THE POT BOILS OVER AND  
"WAAAAA!!"  
AND IT TURNS TO CHAOS.  
IT'S AWESOME.



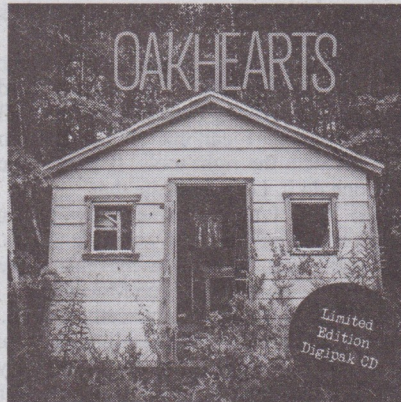


# DAVE SMALLEY & THE BANDOLEROS

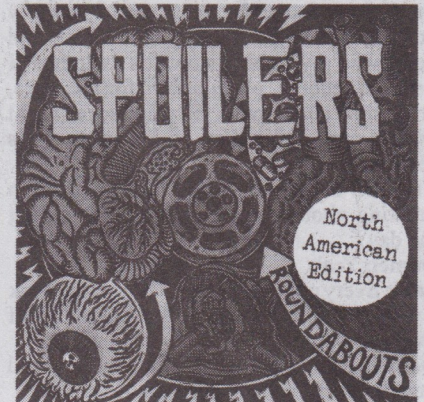
Dave Smalley, the legendary punk rock singer (DYS, All, Dag Nasty, Down By Law) has a new band Formed in 2017, Mr. Smalley has united with The Bandoleros, three Spanish guys, and one crazy Argentinian to create 11 solid punk rock hits. Join the outsiders.



Little Rocket are one of seven labels, who have teamed up to co-release a Pulsebeat Vinyl Compilation. Our input is two unreleased tracks from Medication & Roach Squad, featuring on vocals Dan Gotham from Spoilers, Graeme Philliskirk and Frankie Stubbs on guitar. Compiled by Wayne Elliot who's punk radio show the album is named after. This is not released digitally.



Oakhearts are from Montreal, Québec. This is their stunning debut album. The album has been co-produced, engineered and mixed in Montreal at BBR studio by Ryan Battistuzzi (Malajube, We Are Wolves, Medication, Yesterday's Ring) and mastered by Dan Coutant (Jawbox, Forgetters, War on Women, Coliseum) at his New York State Sun Room studio.

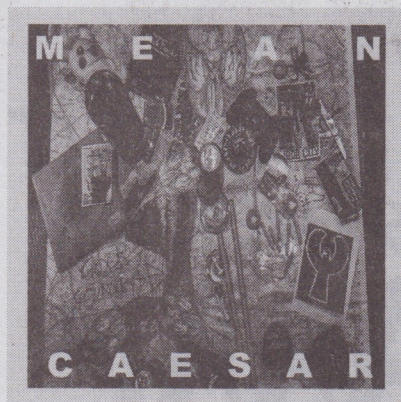


Spoilers play pop punk grounded in a tight melodic hardcore tradition. To do this by mix catchy vocal melodies with riffs that wouldn't be out of place in the early Snuff period and the energy they exert could easily be compared to the combination of China Drum and Gorilla Biscuits in a fist fight with Osker.

Limited Edition Red/Yellow Splatter Vinyl



Welsh punks Question The Mark mix the traditional bearded punk of Hot Water Music/ Leatherface/Banner Pilot with a healthy dose of rock'n'roll guitar pyrotechnics and distinctive Welsh cynicism. QTM are masters of their bleak yet buoyant craft.



Mean Caesar's debut EP deals with London's darker side and personal loss, attaining nosebleed-reaching dimensions. The band proves their punk mastery while retaining all of their raw, buzzed-out power.

Limited Edition Black Vinyl One Side Screenprinted with Yellow Logo.



Lost Avenue, a three piece indie punk band from Northern Ireland, are a powerhouse of an outfit, with distinctive vocals, throwing out memorable firebrand songs that are laced with great melodies. A band consistently on tour they have shared the stage with Ducking Punches, The Murderburgers, DOA, Billy Liar, and Lucinda Livingstone (Kamikaze Girls).

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**Elizabeth:** It's a good song.

**Chris:** That was the first song I suggested I learn first and everyone was like "No."

**Osamu:** It's a little bit more representative of the older style we used to do.

**Vincent:** Since we're clearing the air, earlier in this interview, someone said that the song "SCAB" was misunderstood. Do you want to talk about it?

**Daniel:** [to Osamu] Were you there for the Joe cake incident?

**Osamu:** What was the Joe cake?

**Seth:** We were having auditions for a previous band Osamu and I was in, Antibubbles, via a Craigslist posting.

**Osamu:** Always a good method.

**Daniel:** Craigslist was integral to the history of Antibubbles.

**Seth:** Yes. And Joe came in with a cookie cake that said "Pick Me, Bubbles." He was a sweet guy.

**Elizabeth:** I really like Joe.

**Seth:** His wife is cool too. He ran for government office in wherever he lives. He lost.

**Daniel:** "SCAB" is kind of about Joe.

**Elizabeth:** Wait, what?

**Daniel:** "SCAB" is about Joe. Joe is this, like, basically, a norm. He was into music, but he liked Weezer and stuff. He's a person who applied to join a band he saw advertised on Craigslist.

**Osamu:** And brought a cookie cake.

**Daniel:** Yeah, he wasn't like a punk or anything. When the whole Occupy Wall Street thing happened he had this political awakening. They had Occupy Chapel Hill and they had a tent city at the post office for months and months. Way longer than most places had their Occupy things. And Joe started camping out there. He participated in the meetings, he tried to get involved with Occupy Chapel Hill, and all of those people thought he was a narc and boxed him out. And every time he tried to speak at a meeting everyone would be like, "Cop! Cop!"

**Seth:** I've never heard this and never knew that.

**Daniel:** It fucking pissed me off. Because there's this person who... he's who you want. He is a norm who now wants to be a leftist activist, and because he doesn't have a fucking dread mullet you're going to act like an asshole to him.

**Seth:** Because you don't actually want change, you just want the same people like you to be part of that group.

**Daniel:** And you want to be a fucking cool guy. And you can't be a cool guy unless somebody else is uncool.

**Seth:** I like the idea that you can't be a cool guy unless someone is uncool. It's such a basic thing, but like good.

**Daniel:** I don't like cops.

**Seth:** I don't like cops.

**Elizabeth:** First of all, I don't like cops. Nobody in this band likes cops.

**Seth:** None of us like cops.

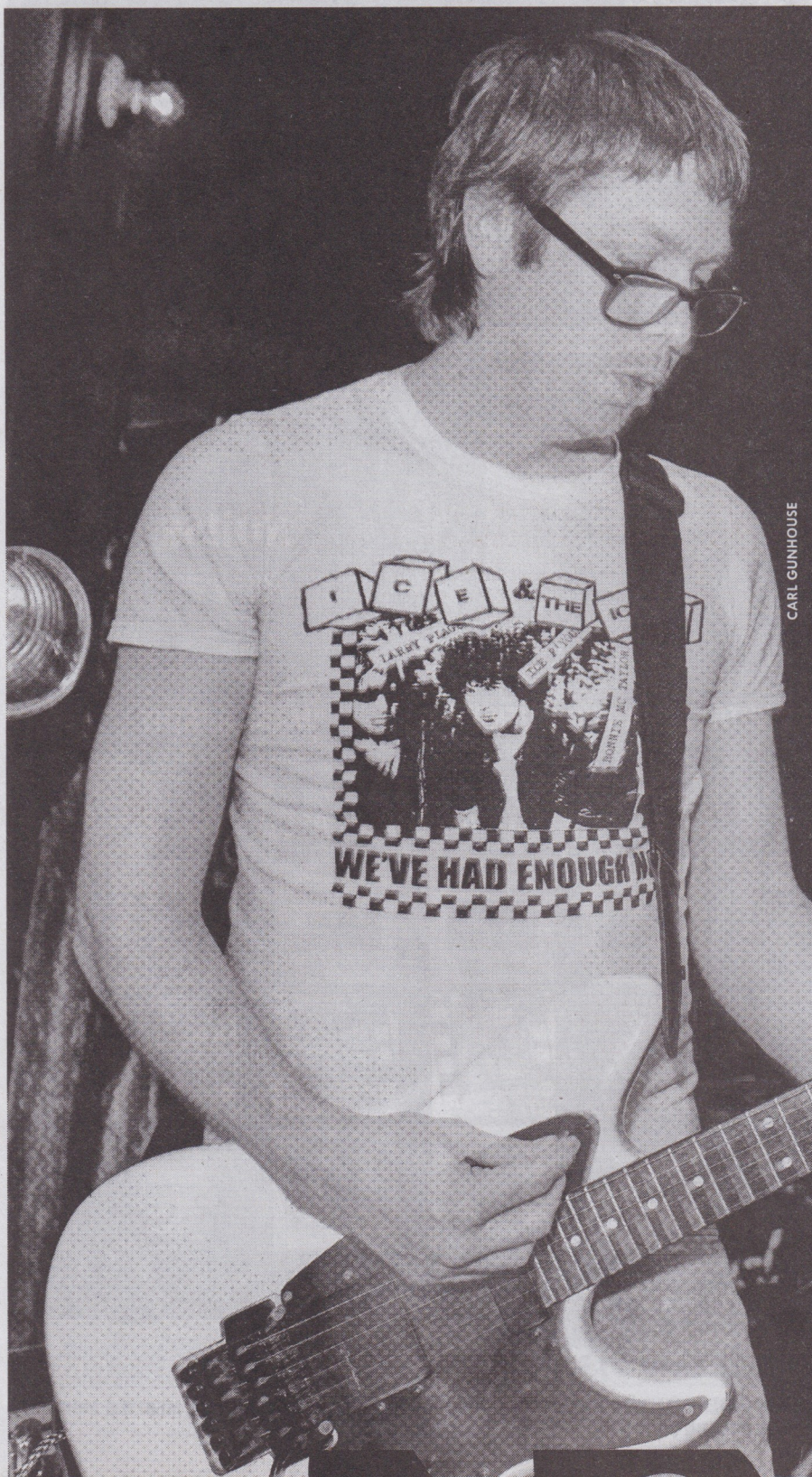
**Vincent:** In freshman year of college, Anti Racist Action was organizing at NC State. I had a friend who lived in the same dorm. Super cool guy, a total norm, and he was like, "Hey Vince, did you see this thing for Anti Racist Action? I'm anti racist. Do you want to go?" The whole first meeting was just a bunch of punks making fun of his sweater. They didn't think he was a narc or anything, but they were just like, "You're not punk, why are you here?" And he was like, "I want to fight racism. My mom gave me this sweater." That made them grill him harder. After that he was like, "I don't want to go again." And I was like, "Yeah, punks are jerks."

**Elizabeth:** That's so sad.

**Chris:** If you've got a mom who cares about you, that's pretty fucking dope.

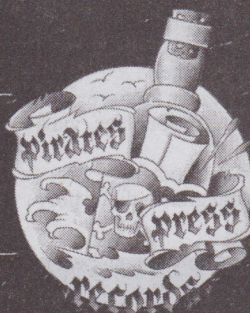
**Seth:** That can be one of the big quotes, like how they have the big quotes in the article...

**Vincent:** [to Elizabeth] Do you feel weird singing other people's lyrics?





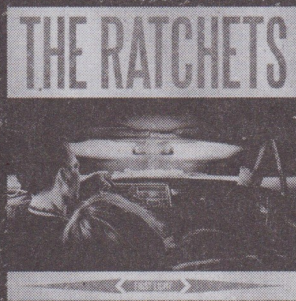
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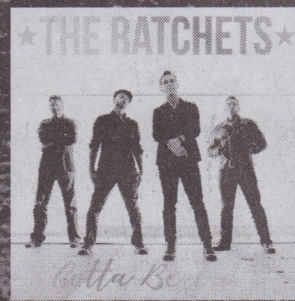
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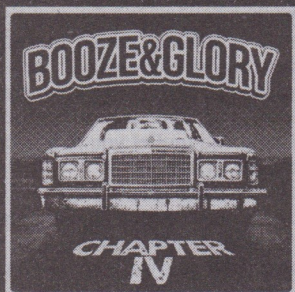
"ONE FAMILY. ONE FLAG"



"FIRST LIGHT" LP/CD



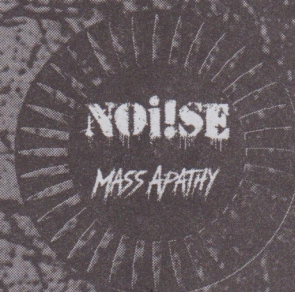
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**Elizabeth:** Sometimes.

**Vincent:** Especially if they're about an ex?

**Seth:** There is one about an ex-cat. Who is running around in the room at the moment. He's all hyper.

**Daniel:** We actually have multiple songs about Tobio.

**Elizabeth:** "Open Mouth" is about Tobio.

**Daniel:** So is "Wild." He always drools.

**Vincent:** Tobio is the cat who peed on your records?

**Seth:** Yeah, me and Elizabeth originally had Tobio, but our other cat was bullying him.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, so much so that he had anxiety.

**Seth:** He would scratch himself until he was

IF YOU WANT A  
FUCKED-UP HAIRCUT  
THAT YOU HAVE NO  
EXPECTATIONS OF  
COME TO ME.



DAVID SCHWENTKER

bleeding. So we gave him to Jet and Daniel. Sweetheart cat, but he was really anxious.

**Elizabeth:** His brother is real aggressive.

**Vincent:** So there's multiple songs about Tobio on the record.

**Elizabeth:** They're very vague. I try to write very vague lyrics that you could...

**Seth:** They could be about anything.

**Daniel:** I did the same thing.

**Seth:** Make them about your own life.





INTRO // TODD TAYLOR

PHOTOS // SUSAN MOSS

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# NARDWUAR

## THE HUMAN SERVIETTE

# V

# STEVE IGNORANT OF CRASS!

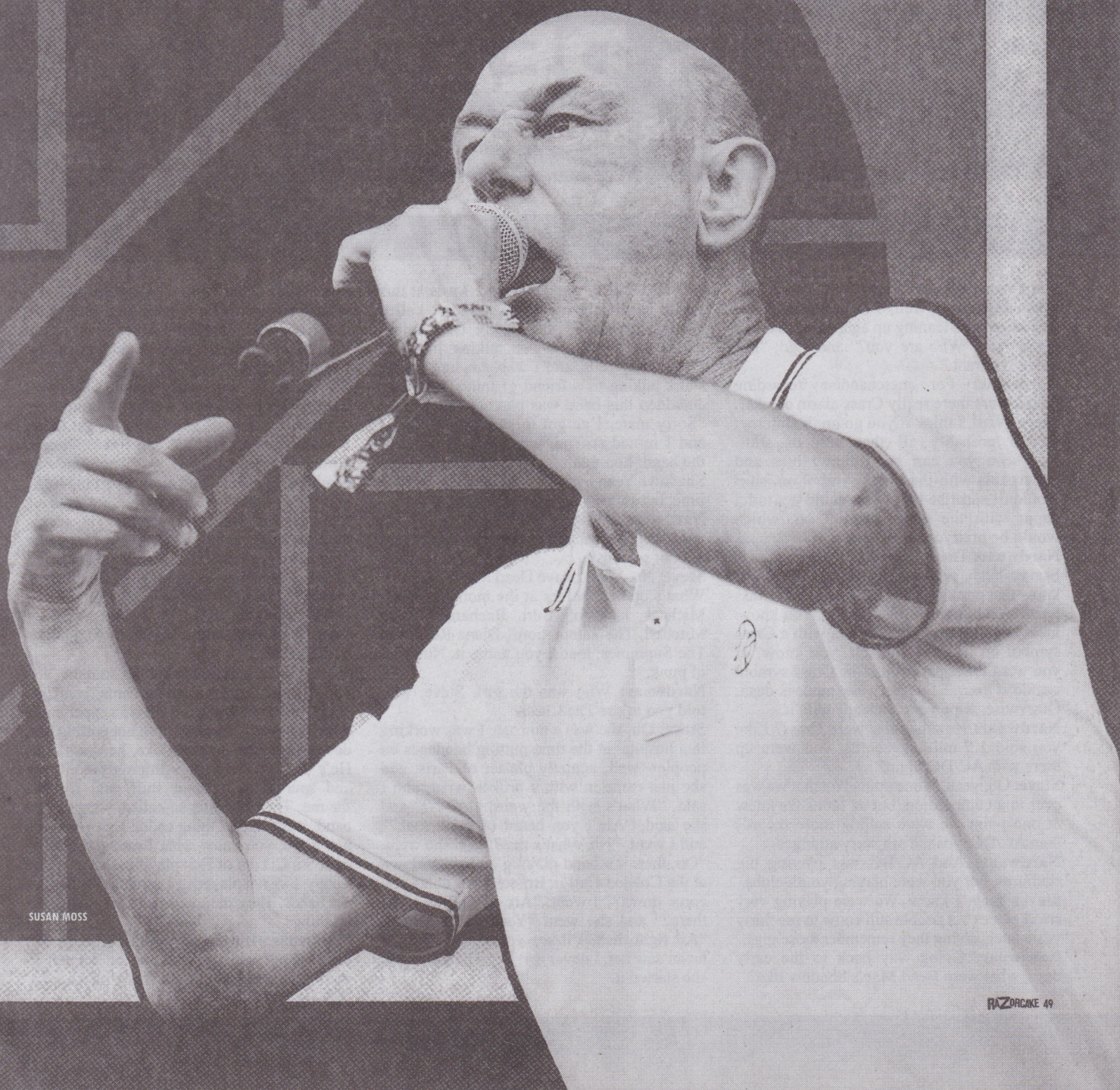
CRASS. WHAT A BAND AND THE QUINTESSENTIAL ANARCHO PUNK MUSIC COLLECTIVE. OVER FORTY YEARS AFTER THEIR FORMATION AND THEY STILL ELICIT STRONG REACTIONS, RANGING FROM UNFETTERED AND WELL-DESERVED FANDOM (GAUGED BY THE NUMBER OF TATTOOS AND BUTT FLAPS WORLDWIDE AND MY WORN-OUT COPY OF *PENIS ENVY*), TO THE ENTIRE SPECTRUM OF CRITICAL APPRECIATION AS ONE OF ENGLAND'S MOST IMPORTANT BANDS AND ON DOWN TO OUTRIGHT DISMISSAL AS "UNLISTENABLE NOISE." IN COMPARISON, THEIR MUSICIANSHIP MADE THE SEX PISTOLS SOUND LIKE ELO AND, TO ME, THAT'S A THING OF ABSOLUTE BEAUTY.

THERE'S SOMETHING TO BE SAID OF A BAND THAT, FOR A TIME, SOLD MORE RECORDS THAN AC/DC, WAS BEING MONITORED BY MARGARET THATCHER (PREVIOUSLY CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS WERE RELEASED IN 2014), AND BYPASSED ROADIES IN FAVOR OF GIVING OUT HOMEMADE SANDWICHES AND TEA TO FOLKS WHO HELPED LUG THEIR GEAR AT SHOWS. CRASS LIVED THEIR SLOGANS OF ANTI-CAPITALISM BY ATTEMPTING TO CONTROL THE PRICE OF THEIR RECORDS ON THEIR OWN RECORD LABEL BY PUTTING "PAY NO MORE THAN..." ON THE COVER, OPTED TO PLAY COMMUNITY HALLS AND NON-CONVENTIONAL PLACES INSTEAD OF ESTABLISHED CLUBS, AND PAID FANZINES OUT OF THEIR EARNINGS WHILE SHUNNING—AND DELIBERATELY FUCKING WITH—THE NATIONAL MEDIA.



A YOUNG NARDWUAR FIRST DISCOVERED CRASS WHILE LISTENING TO THE FLEX YOUR HEAD PUNK SHOW ON CITR IN VANCOUVER YEARS AGO. CRASS MADE HIM SMILE. THEY HAD SHORT SONGS. THE SEED WAS PLANTED. THANKS GO OUT TO MELANIE KAYE FOR CONNECTING THE DOTS BETWEEN CRASS SINGER STEVE IGNORANT AND NARDWUAR AND GETTING THEM IN TOUCH. SINCE STEVE HAS NEVER BEEN TO VANCOUVER, HE CALLED INTO NARDWUAR'S RADIO SHOW AND PATIENTLY ANSWERED OVER AN HOUR'S WORTH OF QUESTIONS.

I THINK NARDWUAR PUTS IT BEST WHEN CONSIDERING THE BAND: "EVERYTHING HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE, BUT THERE WILL NEVER BE ANOTHER CRASS."



SUSAN MOSS



LOOK, IF YOU WANT A TRAINING  
BRA WITH A CRASS SYMBOL ON IT,  
DO IT YOURSELF,  
YOU KNOW? IF YOU WANT TOILET  
PAPER WITH THE CRASS SYMBOL  
ON, DO IT YOURSELF. OTHERWISE,  
PUNK IS DEAD.  
OTHERWISE, WIPE YOUR BACKSIDE WITH IT.



**Nardwuar:** Who are you?

**Steve Ignorant:** Well, I'm the usual bloke you see who is leaning up against the bar and people say "Who are you?" and I go, "I'm Steve Ignorant."

**Nardwuar:** For merchandise regarding Crass, were there really Crass alarm clocks?

**Steve:** Well, I think if you go on the internet there's probably all that sort of stuff. I've seen you can get training bras and underpants with the Crass symbol on, so it wouldn't surprise me if you could get toilet paper with the Crass symbol on, which would be pretty ironic.

**Nardwuar:** That's amazing.

**Steve:** Yeah, which just goes to show you know that punk is dead—that song that Crass wrote. Yeah, punk is dead, mate. You know, look, if you want a training bra with a Crass symbol on it, do it yourself, you know? If you want toilet paper with the Crass symbol on, do it yourself. Otherwise, punk is dead. Otherwise, wipe your backside with it.

**Nardwuar:** How popular were Crass? Like you sold 1.5 million records; you were up there with AC/DC, right?

**Steve:** Oh, yeah, at one point. Not that we were ever in a competition, but as far as we knew at one point we were selling more records than AC/DC, yeah. Yeah, very strange.

**Nardwuar:** And AC/DC was playing big stadiums, but you were playing youth clubs.

**Steve:** Yeah. I know. We were playing very small places but people still come to me thirty years later, saying they remember those gigs.

**Nardwuar:** Going way back to the early days, what were Dead Man's Shadow like?

**Steve:** Oh they were fantastic. I was at this gig, it used to be a squat in London, called Centro Iberico. It was totally DIY before the scene arrived. We're talking like late '70s / early '80s, and I was standing on the stairs talking to a friend of mine and all of a sudden this band was playing and I went, "Sorry mate, I've got to stop you talking," and I turned around, went in, and watched the band. I couldn't leave them. Dead Man's Shadow. Yeah, weren't around for a long time, but I wish they would reform.

**Nardwuar:** Do you have their records on your shelf? What is on your shelf? Are there a lot of records?

**Steve:** No, I don't have Dead Man's Shadow. What's on my shelves at the moment? Well, Michael Jackson, Burt Bacharach, Joni Mitchell, The Temptations, Diana Ross And The Supremes, loads, you name it. Not a lot of punk.

**Nardwuar:** Who was the girl, Steve, who told you to see The Clash?

**Steve:** Oh, she was a nutcase. I was working in a hospital at the time putting bandages on people—well, actually plaster of Paris, and she just came in with a broken wrist, and I said, "What's with the weird clothes?" and she said, "Ain't you heard of punk rock?" and I went, "No, what's that?" and she went, "Oh, there's a band playing on Friday down at the Colston Hall in Bristol, why don't you come down?" I went, "Are you going to be there?" and she went "Yeah," and I went, "All right then, I'll see you there." Yeah, I never saw her, I never met her. Thanks to her, she started it.

**Nardwuar:** She started everything! But I was thinking of the person who hired you at the hospital must have started everything inadvertently. Was it hard to get a gig at the hospital?

**Steve:** No, it was really simple. This was back in 1976 and jobs were still quite easy to come by if you knew where to get them. I walked in the hospital and I said, "Look, I want a job as a porter—you know moving dead bodies around and all that sort of stuff," and they went, "Oh no, we've got nothing like that but what are you like at seeing blood?" and I went, "I don't know. I've never seen a lot," and they said, "Well, you can be a plaster technician." I went, "Oh, that sounds fantastic," and I got the job. Brilliant!

**Nardwuar:** So how many members of Crass were musical? Like Penny had bands in the past?

**Steve:** Look, let's get one thing straight. You know Penny Rimbaud and the name "band" do not go together. What you get is an experience, which is usually tortuous. I'm not putting him down—fair play to the bloke, he does stuff. He's always been into improvisation jazz and spur-of-the-moment stuff, and it's not for me. They had this so-called—it wasn't a band, it was an art thing called Exit—and it's just noise, you know what I mean? Actually, there's a CD out of Exit playing. Pen gave me a copy. I've not played it; I daren't. No, they're not bands. They're more sort of art—situation art things.

**Nardwuar:** But Jimmy Pursey (Sham 69) heard about you for sure and he wanted to market your revolution, Pursey's package?





COURTESY OF STEVE IGNORANT

**Steve:** Yeah, actually, fair play to Jimmy Pursey. It wasn't him who said it. We were invited down by I think it was EMI, and they said, "Come down, you could be part of 'Pursey's package.'" It was this idea that Jimmy Pursey had of doing this thing with all different bands (a package tour and producing some of the bands on the tour). We were like—we weren't going to go for it—you know, we were at the height of Crass, all black clothes and attitude. We went in there—strange, this proper executive office, a big desk with a big bunch of flowers on it and this big bloke sitting behind it in a smart suit—and walked in there, and he said, "Oh, anybody want a drink?" I went, "Yeah, I wouldn't mind a beer, mate." And he clicked his fingers [snaps fingers], and this bloke went and got me a beer. He went, "Now I can market your revolution?" at which point we went, "Ha-ha-ha-ha, keep going mate, we're taping you," but we had a little cassette tape and it ran out.

**Nardwuar:** And you also did a tribute song in Crass to Jimmy Pursey "Hurry Up Garry (The Parsons Farted)"?

**Steve:** Garry Bushell and Tony Parsons were two journalists who wrote for *Sounds*, I think, and *New Musical Express* and they really ripped us to shreds so we just got one back at them.

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant of Crass, what about activism? Do you remember spraying any graffiti—Stop The City? Did you throw any smoke bombs?

**Steve:** I didn't throw smoke bombs. What I did, we emptied out some milk cartons and filled them up with red paint and just threw

them all over the place. I remember doing that. Activism—we sort of got involved but it ended up like—for me it was like you'd go to something like Stop The City (demonstrations in London self-described as a "Carnival Against War, Oppression and Destruction," against the military-financial complex) and the most difficult thing was not to be arrested. Once you were arrested, you're on their bad hit list so you couldn't go to next year's. So you had to sort of try and stay under the radar.

**Nardwuar:** But people knew Crass were involved in activism. You actually had contact with a skinhead punk soldier who gave you the inside information for the song "How Does It Feel"?

**Steve:** No, that was a sailor. He was in the Royal Navy and he was a skinhead. He wrote to me saying what a bunch of—the word begins with W and ends with S—I won't say it live. I wrote back and said, "Well, I'll reply to you. You've been brave enough to reply to me," and then he totally changed his tune. We met up with him. He went out to the Falklands and told us the stories, and that's where the song comes from. He'd actually seen action and he'd seen friends of his die, so we didn't make fun of it. You can't. It's a very serious business. I'd love to meet up with the bloke again.

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant, did you have a hard time remembering all the lyrics? Because you look at the Crass lyrics—and they were incredible—how did you remember the lyrics?

**Steve:** I think it's called brainwashing. I'm not sure, you know. I mean it's ridiculous isn't it? Because one Crass song is like an Oasis album with the amount of lyrics in it. But, yeah, I still remember them to this day. I have a thing called sleep Tourette's. I wake up in the middle of the night swearing and Yona, my wife, will go, "What are you swearing about?" and I'm like, "Oh, something that happened thirty, forty years ago." But, yeah, I'll be quoting Crass lyrics in me sleep.

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant, I was curious, the Thatcher tape. (A hoax pulled off by members of Crass, which used excerpts from speeches by Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. The spliced-together recording was purported to be a telephone conversation between the two leaders.) People thought they were actual KGB tapes, and the KGB actually wanted to recruit you, you went to visit them, and they went under the pretense of being a literary mag. How did that happen?

**Steve:** No, they didn't want to recruit us. It wasn't that at all. What it was, we did this tape—and I can't remember—we sent it to someone in Europe, and six months later a little snippet appeared in *The Washington Post* or something and then all of a sudden it blew up. It was like, "Oh, is this a KGB tape?" and some journalist got in touch with us from *The Observer* in England, and said, "Oh, it was you, wasn't it?" and we went "What's us?" and he said, "It's you, that tape," and we went, "Oh, you had better come over for a cup of tea, mate." And he came over.

Anyway, blah blah blah, and we admitted it, and then the Russians sent over some journalists and the Americans sent over some journalists in a hotel in London, but the Russians were in one room and the Americans were in the other. We had to do this interview on the same day, so we were going from one room to the other. We got fed up running up and down the corridor, so we went, "Look, for christ's sake, why don't we all just sit in the same room?" Plus, the Russians had bought vodka and we'd taken advantage of that, and we got the Americans drinking the vodka. Then the Russians and the Americans started talking together and they forgot all about us, so we just ended up going down to the pub.

**Nardwuar:** And you solved world peace!

**Steve:** Well we could have done, I mean, better than Sylvester Stallone and Dolph Lundgren in *Rocky IV*, you know what I mean [laughs]?

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant of Crass, did Margaret Thatcher ever actually hear "How Does It Feel"?

**Steve:** No, I think she heard of it and I wouldn't be surprised if her advisers were quoted some of the lyrics to it because I know that when the papers became public—that was like about three years ago (the official government documents on ThatcherGate were released to the National Archives in 2014)—it was in there that she knew of us. We were sent a circular, a bit of paper from the Houses of Parliament, and on no account should any member of the Tory party or the Conservative party have any dealings whatsoever with any person or persons pertaining to be a member of a band known as Crass. So she knew about us, that cow.

**Nardwuar:** The MI5, they had a dossier on you?

**Steve:** Yeah.

**Nardwuar:** Did they film gigs? What is in the dossier? Can you request that through Freedom of Information Acts?

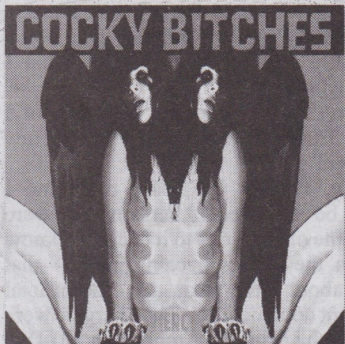
**Steve:** Yeah, I think you can. I can't be bothered. But I don't think MI5 came to the gigs but I know there was a lot of undercover police. You could always tell them because you get these blokes turn up, a bit scruffy, and the further you went down, you looked at their trousers and they weren't so scruffy and then the shoes were very nicely polished. You could always tell them.

Plus our phone was tapped, we knew that. It wasn't only us. It was bands like Conflict, Poison Girls, the Cravats; everyone was being tapped at that time. You've got to remember, and certainly with a band called Stagal 17 from Belfast who came over—because the Troubles in Ireland were going on in the time—the government were really, really paranoid so everyone was under surveillance. It weren't just Crass—but I'm proud to say that, yeah, there was actually a file. Why do you think I get stopped every time I go through an airport: "Mr. Williams?" "Yeah, that's me," "Come in this room," "Oh, for christ sake, right, yep there you go."

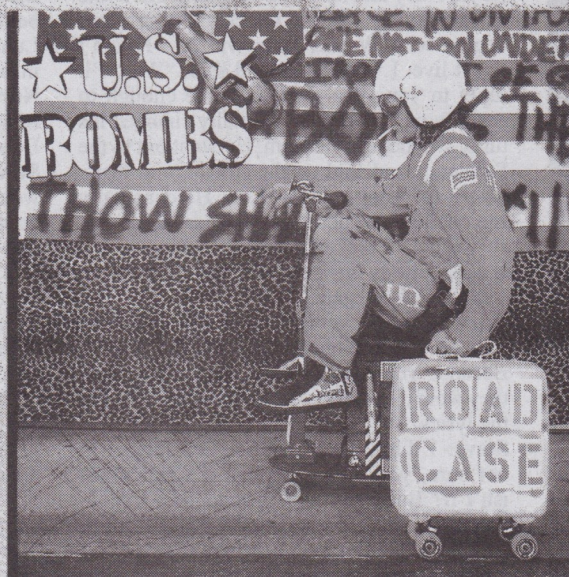


# SLOPE RECORDS

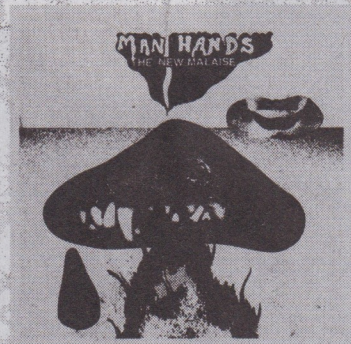
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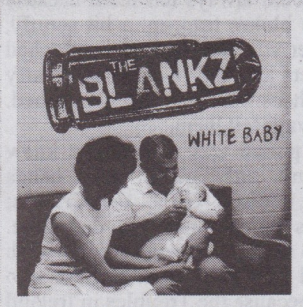
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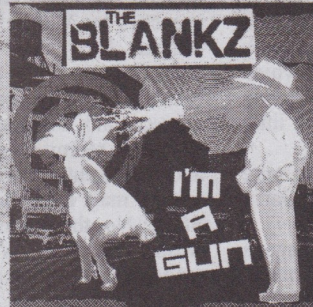
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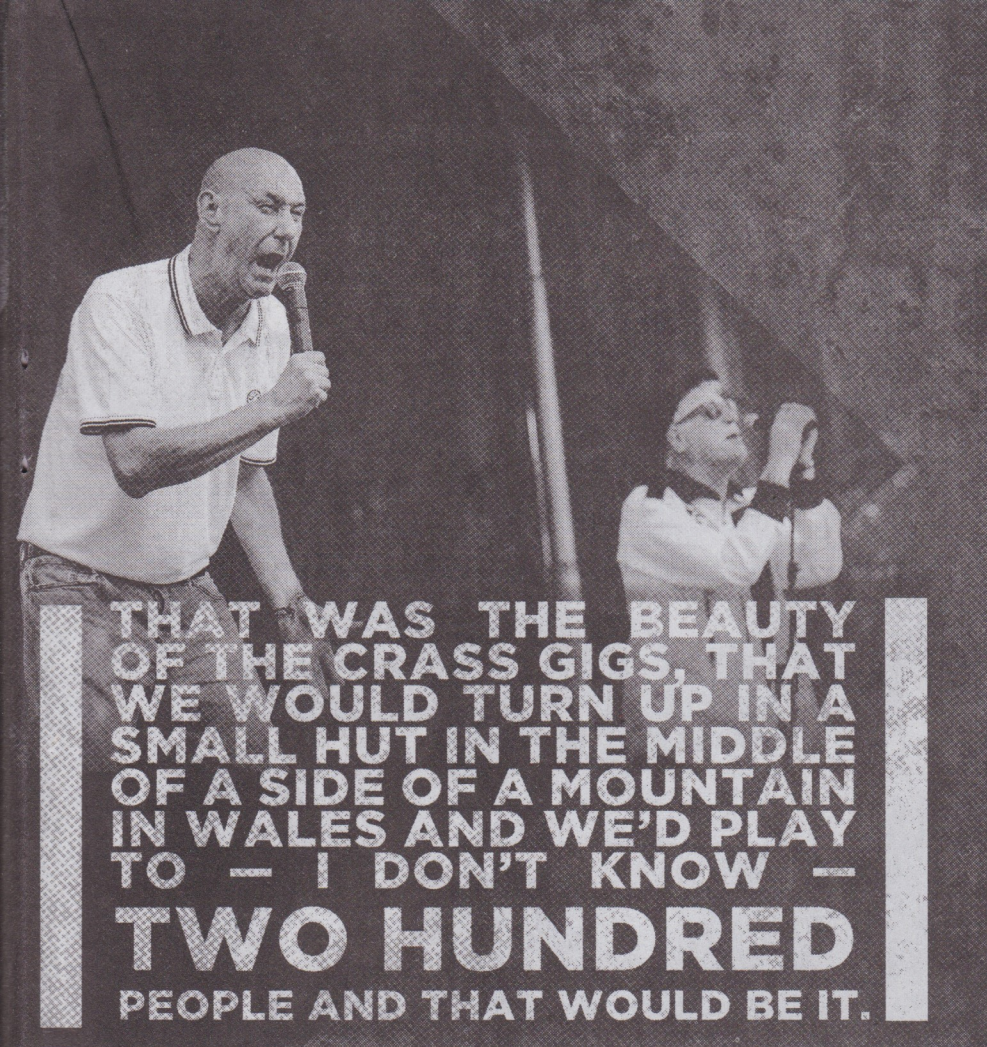
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SUSAN MOSS

**Nardwuar:** What else was created at Dial House (an intentional community in Essex, home to Crass)? There was a lot of music, but what about art? Like, that's why I find it really interesting there aren't many films of Crass. Were there films created at Dial House of Crass?

**Steve:** No, no that wasn't what we were about. Crass was about doing it. You did the gig and you did it. You also have to remember that in those days, we're talking there was no internet, there was no mobile phones. If you had a video camera, it was the size of a tank and you had to have a huge battery with you as well to carry it around with. Cameras were sort of the insta-click-it things. So that's why there's not a lot of films of Crass about; it just weren't done. People who came to Crass gigs weren't doing it to record it or anything like that. They were going for the spur of the moment, you know, and that was the beauty of the Crass gigs, that we would turn up in a small hut in the middle of a side of a mountain in Wales and we'd play to—I don't know—two hundred people and that would be it. That's why people remember it with such fond memories.

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant of Crass, which stores refuse to sell Crass?

**Steve:** Oh that would be HMV, WHSmiths, and I can't remember. They've all sort of closed down now. But, yeah, a lot of record stores.

**Nardwuar:** Was it hard to borrow money from the Poison Girls?

**Steve:** No, they had loads of it so we borrowed it and we paid it back, simple as that. We was all mates, you know? I think we done some sort of scam with someone else. I can't remember. Yeah, it's all a bit sort of dark and seedy but that's the way we worked in those days—you beg, borrow, and steal, and that's what we did.

**Nardwuar:** The lead singer Vi Subversa of the Poison Girls, she was quite a bit older, but she looked so cool. What were they like? What were the Poison Girls like, Steve of Crass?

**Steve:** Look, Vi Subversa from Poison Girls was one of the most wonderful people you could have ever had the fortune to meet. I miss her dreadfully. I remember, christ, back in 1980, maybe 1981, we were playing a gig in Birmingham, and the Poison Girls were on. This bloke come out and went, "Blimey Steve, she's a bit old to be doing this," and I went, "What are you going to be doing when you're forty?" And I'm sixty now.

The last time I met her she was riddled with rheumatism, but what a woman. I mean the songs she wrote about being a single mother and the problems that that brought, and bringing up kids. I would really advise people to listen to Poison Girls because she

had a voice like Eartha Kitt. She was just fantastic. Vi, I have such fond memories of that band. Paranoid Visions play with me in Canada—yeah, there's going to be a tribute to Vi and Poison Girls.

**Nardwuar:** Are you, Steve, kind of responsible for zines? Are Crass responsible for zines? You didn't talk to mainstream press. You gave a lot of money to zines—do you remember giving money to zines? Which zines benefitted from Crass?

**Steve:** Oh, all of them. We weren't interested in talking to the established media or the music papers because what you'd do, they'd come over and do an interview, and you'd open the paper and they would take you out of context, whereas with fanzines, they'd come over and the fanzine would be four bits of paper stapled together done by a kid who was maybe fifteen years old. I don't think your younger members will understand what this is, but a printer on a Gestetner machine or photocopied or xeroxed, and that's what we supported. It was about do it yourself, and use the facilities you've got.

**Nardwuar:** But you actually gave money to the fanzines. Do you remember some of the fanzines you gave money to like, *Toxic Graffiti* or *Subvert*?

**Steve:** Of course, yeah, *Toxic Graffiti*, *Kill Your Pet Puppy*. All of them, you know? Blimey, there was so many. *Suspect Device*, that sort of stuff, and some of them are still going. Slowly but surely. We gave money to anybody that was worthy of it, of course we would. We were making money from gigs. What were we going to do with it? Spend it? Piss it up the wall with beer? No, we gave the money to people who mattered and the people who mattered were the ones trying to do something.

**Nardwuar:** Crass always gave a lot of food out at gigs, soup. Did you have a favorite type of soup?

**Steve:** No, we didn't give soup out. What we used to do was take our own sandwiches and flasks of tea and when we turned up there we didn't have roadies so the people there waiting to go in would be like, "Do you want a hand in with the gear?" and we'd go, "Yeah," and we'd get the tea and sandwiches out and of course they'd eat them. So, no, we never gave soup out. My favorite soup? I don't know. I'd rather have a cup of tea.

**Nardwuar:** Steve of Crass, I was always fascinated how Andy of Crass played guitar. How did Andy play guitar?

**Steve:** He couldn't play guitar! How long had we been together—five years, seven years—what we used to do was tune his guitar to an open D chord and he used to put his hand—rather than underneath with the thumb at the back of the neck—he'd just put his fingers over the top of it so basically you just use your fingers moving up and down. It's just an open chord and all he used to do was scrub it. Fair play to the bloke. He never learned to play a proper chord in his life. I spoke to him the other day. He still can't play guitar.

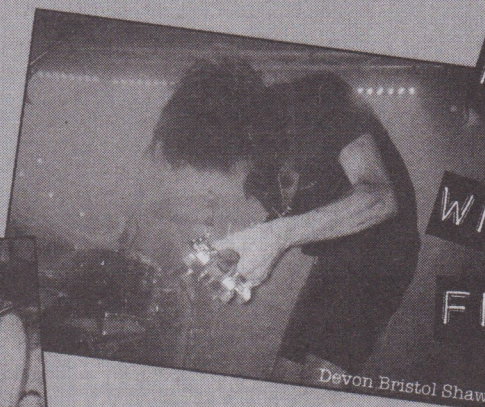


# Greenway

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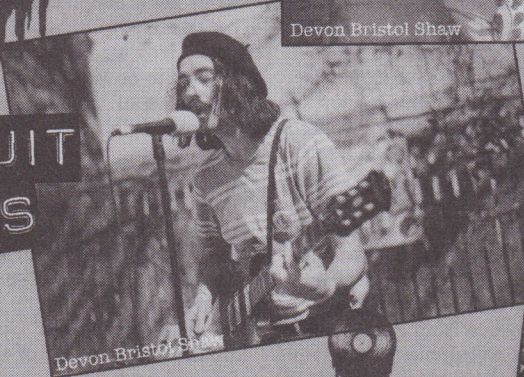
FRANKIE  
AND THE  
WITCH  
FINGERS



JANE  
CHURCH



FRUIT  
TONES

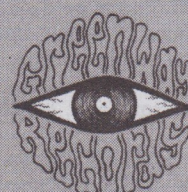
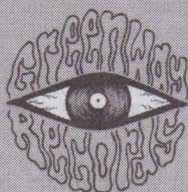


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WE WERE MAKING MONEY FROM GIGS. WHAT WERE WE GOING TO DO WITH IT? SPEND IT? PISS IT UP THE WALL WITH BEER? NO, WE GAVE THE MONEY TO PEOPLE WHO MATTERED AND THE PEOPLE WHO MATTERED WERE THE ONES TRYING TO DO SOMETHING.



SUSAN MOSS

**Nardwuar:** Steve Ignorant of Crass, I was curious about Björk's band. Do you remember that? Björk's first band on Crass records?

**Steve:** I certainly do, yeah. Kukl, difficult to say, it's Icelandic. Einar—who was the trumpet player and the other vocalist—he explained to me that Kukl actually means "magic" in Icelandic or something like that. Björk was this beautiful, absolutely beautiful, fifteen year old which sounds really weird, but I mean beautiful as in a work of art. And what a vocal range she had, this amazing sound coming out of this little woman. Fantastic.

Then they became Sugarcubes and I saw them as well. I'm still friends with Einar, who I saw last year. His son is now in a band. I can't remember what the bloody band is called. Björk has gone on and I dare say one day we'll pass on the street and have a cup of tea together, and go. "Hello, how you doing, how's things," and all that sort of stuff.

**Nardwuar:** How would you describe them to people listening? How would you describe Kukl, seeing them live.

**Steve:** It was an experience. You can't say it was punk rock but the minute she opened her mouth and started singing, you were activated and you were riveted to the spot.

**Nardwuar:** Where did you see them play?

**Steve:** The first time I saw them play was in Iceland. There was a peace rally they were doing in Iceland. Crass were invited to go over and play, so it was 1983. Andy Palmer was still in the band. There's a photograph of me and Andy sitting backstage—this big sort of festival thing and Kukl played and Crass played afterwards. That's the first time we performed *Yes Sir, I Will* in its entirety.

Penny Rimbaud couldn't do it—he got an ear infection—so we had to get Martin from Flux Of Pink Indians to do drumming for us. But I remember watching Björk again and absolutely inspiring, awe inspiring, fantastic, fantastic woman.

**Nardwuar:** Crass Records had so many cool records like Captain Sensible, *This Is Your Captain Speaking*. How did that happen?

**Steve:** I think he just phoned up. Do you know what? I can't remember how it happened. He phoned up and came over. He only had a couple of choruses, and I think Penny Rimbaud ended up writing a lot of the lyrics for him, but, yeah, you know, started working together. He just came over and had a cup of tea, came to Dial House where Crass used to live.

**Nardwuar:** What about Chumbawamba?

**Steve:** Ah now the Chumbas, we never actually met them. Crass were doing Crass, Chumbas were doing Chumbas, and when I bump into them ...

**Nardwuar:** Were they on the *Bullshit Detector* comps?

**Steve:** Oh yeah they was on it, but we didn't know who they were. They became Chumbawamba—"I get knocked down" and all that sort of stuff—but they've done other stuff apart from that, you know. They're still going on to do things as separate members and I bump into them now and again. It wasn't like, "Oh wow, I'm working with Chumbawambas," "Oh wow, I'm working with Sensible," "Wow, I'm working with Björk," we were just people doing simply-minded stuff and we were doing what we were doing. As I say, you know, Chumbas were doing what they were doing and Conflict,

they had a slightly different audience to what Crass did, and The Exploited as well. We were just doing what we were doing.

**Nardwuar:** So keep on rocking in the free world Steve and doot doola doot doo...

**Steve:** Do-do-do-ah-loo-do!

**Nardwuar:** Almost, you almost got it! Doot doola doot do ...

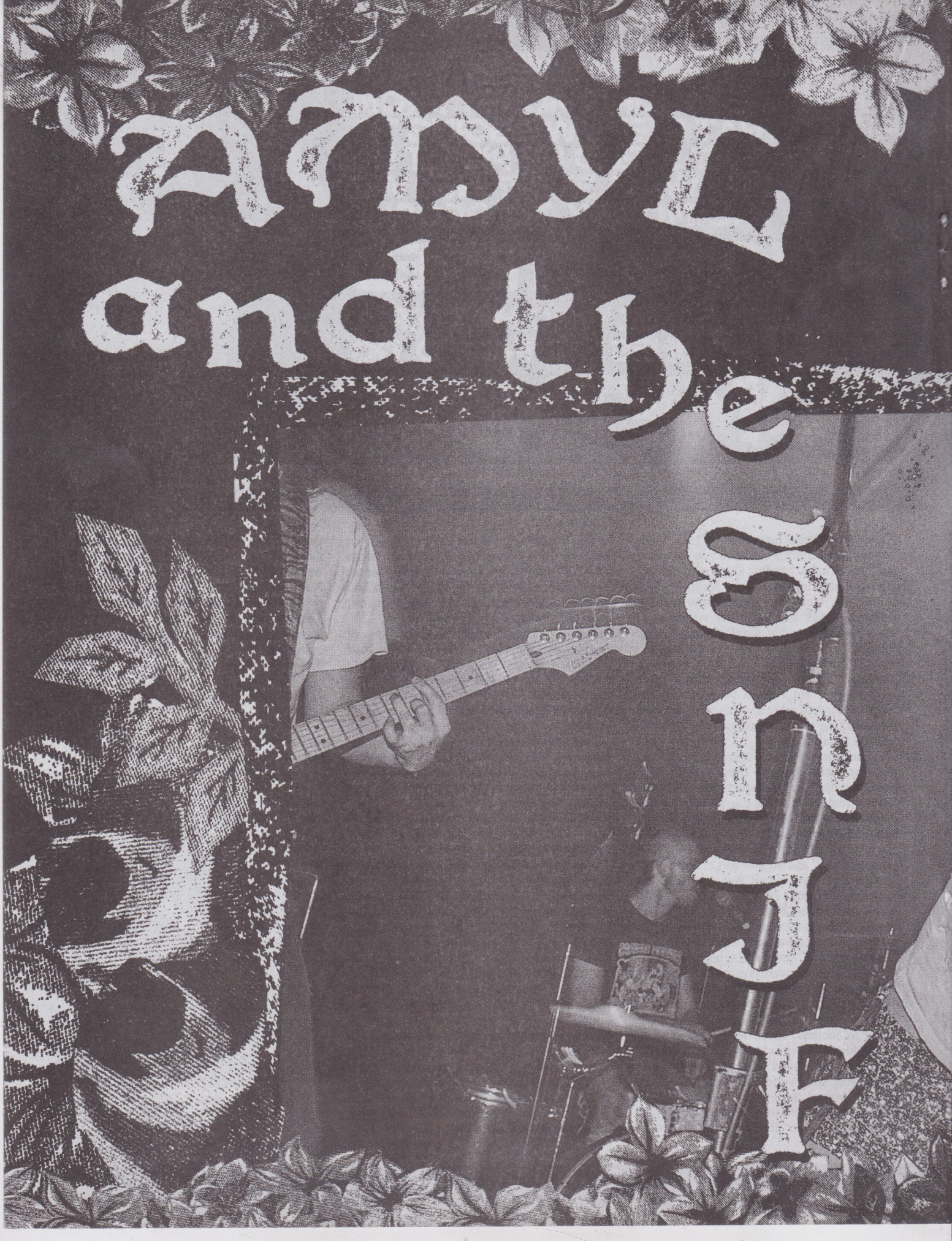
**Steve:** Ooh-ooh.

To hear this interview hop to [nardwuar.com](http://nardwuar.com)



AMYL  
and the

S  
n  
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F





Amyl And The Sniffers—live or on record—are like getting struck by lightning. You may not know what just happened, you may lose a shoe from the impact, but you won't soon forget them.

A stark and brilliant contrast, a little bit out of nowhere, Melbourne's Amyl And The Sniffers play the type of punk that's primitive, sharp, and uncomplicated but incredibly effective. If you want difficult literature set to music, or music that needs to be explained, look elsewhere. If you crave live wire, chew toy-simple contemporary punk and want to sing along to songs about stolen bicycles, lost love, munchies, and self-empowerment, their songs will make your ears glow blue and your eyes to spring out of their sockets.

Due to their Australian pedigree, I hear a through-line of Cosmic Psychos, Bits Of Shit, Ooga Boogas, and

early Eddy Current Suppression Ring with one important difference. This band-gang is fronted and led by a woman, Amy. There are more than just common punk weather patterns when Amy sings, "I'm not a loser." As the backups kick in, The Sniffers form a united front and refrain, "She's not a loser!" It's 2019 and it sucks that Australia's history of wonderful punk music has largely been bereft of strong female musicians. (Thankfully, this is changing.) What you hear and see of Amyl And The Sniffers is directly from their brains and fingers out into the world without the capitalism-calculated gloss and predatory slime of the music industry. Self-representation makes all the difference in the world.

Turning gutters into butter and lightning into electrifying music, say hello to Amyl And The Sniffers. They're folks you can trust.

Interview by Todd Taylor

Bryce: Drums

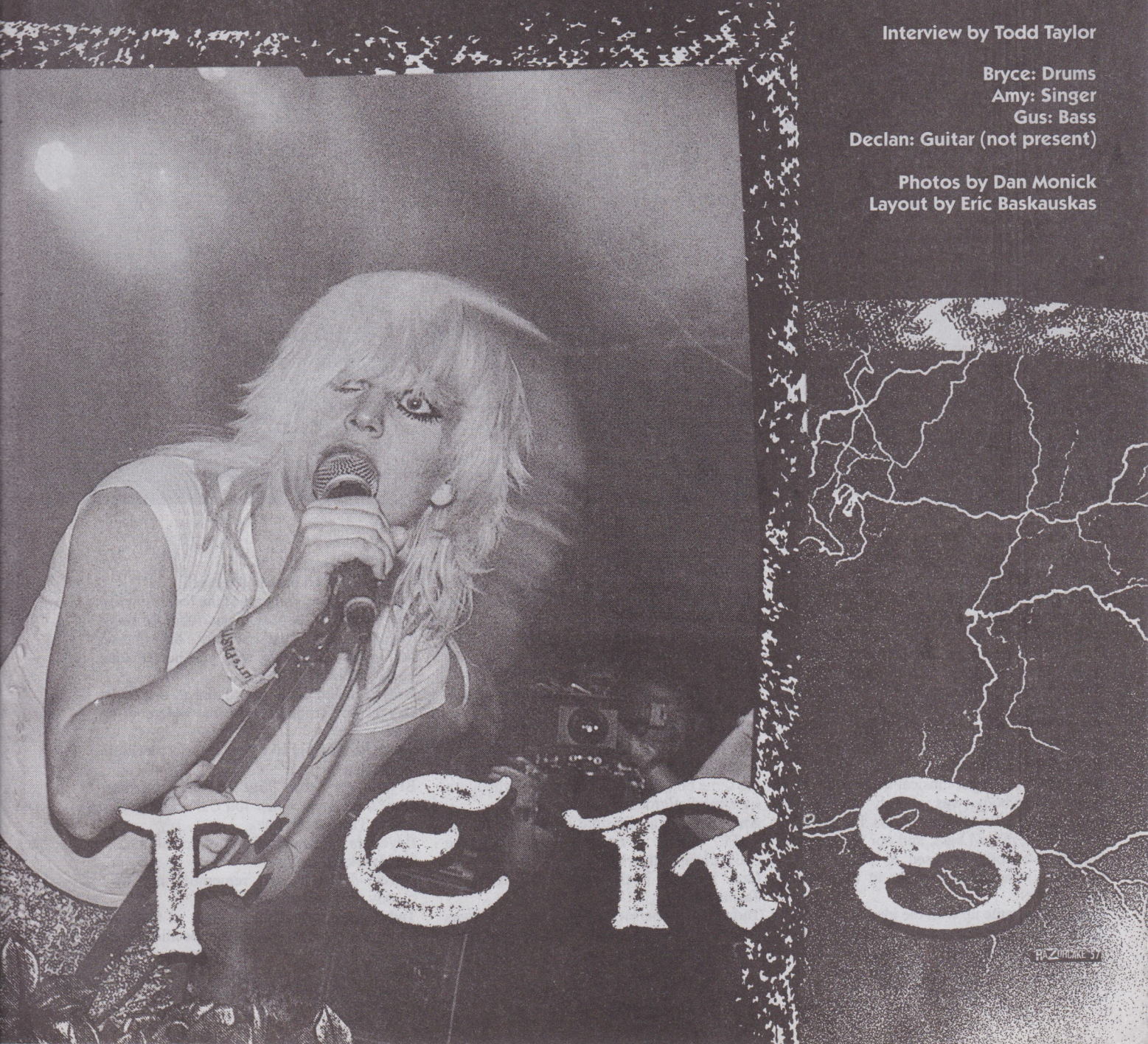
Amy: Singer

Gus: Bass

Declan: Guitar (not present)

Photos by Dan Monick

Layout by Eric Baskauskas







**Todd:** You guys recorded your first EP, *Giddy Up* in a matter of hours. I believe you, but I don't believe you at the same time. If you just have a house of four people and you say, "Hey, let's record a record," 99.9% of the time that's going to happen, it's going to be shit. How was it not shit for you?

**Bryce:** I think it is shit, to be honest. [laughs]

**Gus:** It's the simplicity.

**Todd:** Yeah, but how did you get a house full of four people that played three different instruments and singing?

**Bryce:** We've all got musical backgrounds.

**Amy:** Everybody was already in bands, except for me. Bryce played bass. Declan the guitarist, he played bass, and our old bassist (Calum Newton), he used to play guitar. Everyone swapped their roles in what they were doing.

**Todd:** Who came up with the idea to record?

**Amy:** For ages, we were talking about

starting a B-52's kinda band that we could just play at parties—it'll be funny and fun 'cause all of our friends are musos and it can be something we can do to hang out. Then, I just got home and it was all set up in my bedroom and everyone was fiddling with their instruments. "Yeah, we're doing this."

**Todd:** What job did you come home from that day?

**Bryce:** Declan came home from Big W, which is pretty much like a Wal-Mart in Australia. I worked downstairs from him in the same building, at Woolworth's which is a supermarket/grocery store.

**Amy:** I think at the time I was probably at TAFE, which is community college, the really cheap university.

**Gus:** I wasn't in the band. I was living in Tasmania.

**Todd:** But the person that you did replace was Calum. He was in Lunatics On Pogosticks?

**Gus:** So is Bryce.

**Bryce:** I played bass in it as well.

**Todd:** So, were you part of the record, *Leave Your Dishes in the Sink, They'll Still Be There in the Morning*? That was Amy's only diss on you guys, with living with you in the same house, the dirty dishes.

**Amy:** I haven't even heard that record.

**Bryce:** We probably said that before in an interview.

**Amy:** [to Bryce] Have you guys got an album called that?

**Bryce:** It's *Leave Your Worries at Home, They'll be There When You Get Back...*

**Todd:** The newest one...

**Bryce:** Is the demo version of that album.

**Todd:** Okay.

**Bryce:** I can't even remember my own bloody music. [laughs]

**Todd:** Let's talk about the look of the band because it is very Australian-specific. When





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someone mentioned Sharpies, I thought SHARPs—Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice. What, in an Australian context, is a Sharpie?

**Amy:** Sharpie was a subculture in Melbourne, but it was all over Australia as well. They dressed a certain way and they listened to certain music. They were pretty rough, as well. They always had mullets and wore tight cardigans.

**Todd:** But it only lasted for three or four years, right?

**Amy:** Yeah. It's kind of like an Australian adaptation of punk.

**Todd:** I saw a video of The Coloured Balls from 1973.

**Amy:** They were awesome.

**Todd:** You sound nothing like The Coloured Balls.

**Amy:** No.

**Todd:** But you guys walking into this

backyard today, you kinda look like them. Pretty tight shaved heads, either rat tail or mullet in the back. Is this intentional, and why is it?

**Bryce:** I think we all have our own haircuts for different reasons. We all have different influences. For myself, I don't know much about Sharpie culture or have anything to do with it, really. I just like having a mullet. I didn't look like this (much more shaved head) a few days ago. I just thought it was a cool haircut, really.

**Gus:** The hair was getting too long, then we had a big night out and it was begging to be shaved. And that's why we look so foolish now. But it feels good. It feels real nice.

**Todd:** Amy, where's your context for the Sharpies? Did it come from your parents?

**Amy:** Declan, our guitarist, he's definitely more into that stuff. He knows heaps about it. He's a real music buff, so he knows all about

it. For me, the music my parents liked is the music I like, all the Skyhooks and AC/DCs and Rose Tattoo.

**Todd:** So, Amy your mom works at the post office and she studies psychology?

**Amy:** She just finished her degree. She's been studying that for eight years while working at the post office. She's really smart. It's her first degree—I don't even know what kind of degree it is, but she got high distinction. She smashed it.

**Todd:** Is she going to do anything in psychology?

**Amy:** I think she wants to start off doing children's psychology with play therapy. So you'll have a room set up with toys and then the kid will come in and play with stuff and the way they play with stuff, they'll tell you what's going on instead of using their mouth.

**Todd:** I've seen art therapy. Kids draw something. They're not given any prompts,



but using the art as cipher. How people use puppets and stuff like that.

**Amy:** It's pretty cool. It's like sign language for kids, really. Kids' emotions.

**Todd:** Your dad's a crane driver.

**Amy:** Yeah. He's been doing that since he was young.

**Todd:** You've said they're both bogans. What's a bogan?

**Amy:** Uhhhh, they actually called me out. "Don't call us bogans, Amy." [laughter] My Dad, especially, swears a lot, drinks beer. Goes to car shows. Likes old Holden EHs—old Holdens.

**Gus:** Like an Australian equivalent of a redneck or a chav.

**Todd:** What's a chav?

**Gus:** It's a British equivalent. A slogan or a label for somebody—usually for people from a lower socio-economic class—not as educated, not as wealthy. But it stands for Council House and Violent. Bogan doesn't have an acronym, as far as I'm aware. It probably does.

**Todd:** The American equivalent would also be white trash. Part of it can be, I can self-identify as white trash, but somebody else calling me white trash, fuck them.

**Amy:** Kind of the same. If someone was like, "You're a bunch of bogans," I'd be like, "Fuck you, cunt." But then I'd be like, "Dad's a bogan." But again, that's the sort of thing where a bogan can a lot of times be associated with racism. That's the filthy part. I don't want to be associated with that part of it.

**Todd:** In America, Trump has fucked that stuff up.

**Amy:** He's fucked in the head.

**Todd:** It's awful. Let's get some Australian terms. What's a larrikin?

**Bryce:** [chuckles] A joker.

**Amy:** Little trouble maker. Cheeky bugger.

**Todd:** An ocker?

**Amy:** That's the way you speak. An ocker is you talk really Australian slang and you're kind of hard to understand.

**Gus:** If you speak in a lot of Australian slang, "Oh, he speaks really ocker."

**Todd:** Can you give me an Australian line?

**Bryce:** Bloody struth.

**Gus:** It's not lines. There's lots of different ones because Australia has infinite slang for lots of different things. Like anywhere else, regional. And different people say different things from different places, but it's still quintessentially Australian.

**Todd:** Daggy.

**Gus:** Uncool.

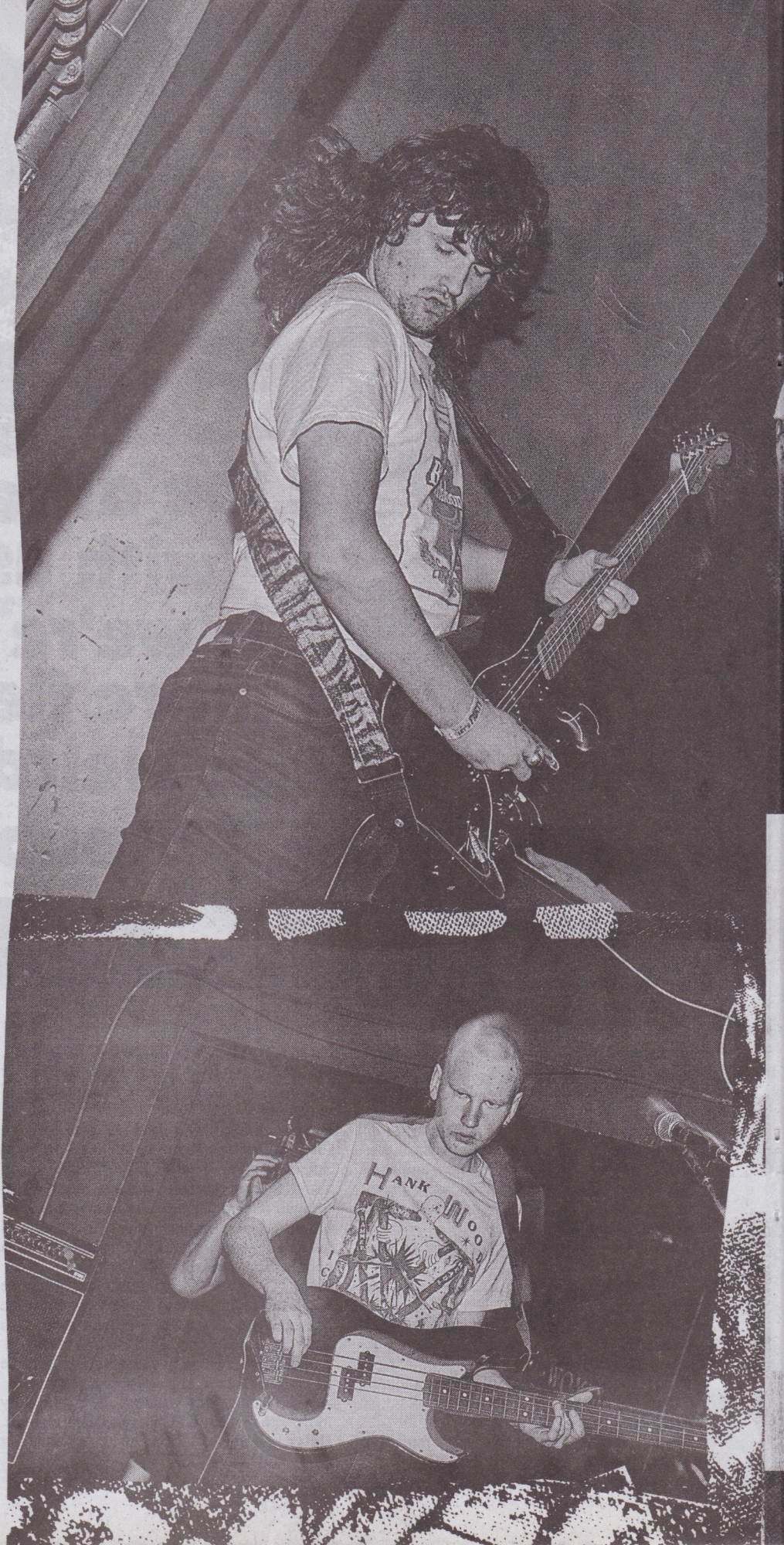
**Amy:** Okay, so the word daggy comes from—you know how a sheep, they'll have a bit of wool sticking out of their butt and it gets shit on it? It's the shitty, matted bit of wool next to their butt that the farmer has to cut off. That's a dag. So when you say someone's daggy, it's unstylish. You're shitty. You're just a matted bit of wool.

**Bryce:** Dorky.

**Todd:** Wow. Drongo?

**Gus:** That's a good one. Just an idiot.

**Amy:** A fool. A gorilla.





**Todd:** I don't want it to be derogatory.

**Amy:** You're in the clear.

**Todd:** Chunder.

**Amy:** Vomit.

**Todd:** Pong. Someone said, describing your music: "If music had a smell, theirs would pong terribly."

**Amy:** Stinky. Pong is a strong scent. [laughs]

**Todd:** Amy, so you're from Mullumbimby?

**Amy:** Yeah.

**Todd:** It's called "The Biggest..."

**Amy:** "Little Town in Australia."

**Todd:** So it's kind of like Reno, Nevada. Do you know anything about the stone arrangement, which is located forty kilometers away from Mullumbimby, and it's said to date earlier than Stonehenge?

**Amy:** Whoooooah. No, I don't know anything about it.

**Bryce:** What's it called?

**Todd:** It's called "a stone arrangement." [laughter]

**Amy:** It's probably "a stoned arrangement." It's a very hippie town.

**Todd:** That's funny, because when I read about it, the city said, "We will not release the exact location of it" because it was getting fucked with. And they think that it's the site of some of the earliest language in the world.

**Bryce:** I've never even heard of that before.  
**Amy:** Never.

**Todd:** That's on the Mullumbimby Wikipedia page.

**Bryce:** Is Amy on there?

**Todd:** Not yet. There were quite a few "notable people" for a town that's 3,400.

**Amy:** There's a famous swimmer that our swimming pool was named after. (Petria Thomas, swimming Olympic gold medalist.)

**Todd:** Off the power of two EPs, you have traveled the world.

**Amy:** It's pretty crazy.

**Todd:** When I was a kid, I remember in Australia, I loved Ned Kelly because Australia celebrates outlaws. They're kind of dumb and kind of inspired. You understand that you're putting on metal to stop bullets, but the bullets still get through and it really

hurts. [laughter] He robbed so many banks. There's something terribly awesome about that. A contemporary of him would be Chopper Read.

**Amy:** Can I give you a little fact? Our manager used to manage Chopper Read.

**Todd:** How do you manage Chopper Read?

**Amy:** Towards the end of his life, he had a book. Our manager has so many stories about Chopper bloody Read.

**Todd:** So you guys are nothing compared to that—you're not going to bite someone's ear off.

**Bryce:** Well, maybe.

**Gus:** Not really comparable within Australian mythology.

**Todd:** Exactly.

**Amy:** I'd bite somebody's ear off.

**Todd:** Would you?

**Amy:** Maybe. [laughs]

**Todd:** When I was talking about the Sharpies, in my head I see Amy! And the Sniffers as a gang and a gang that's lead by a woman. Would that be a fair assessment?

**Gus:** Yeah, totally.

**Todd:** With that in mind, can you name me another Australian punk band that has a woman singer and/or who is the driving force behind the band? I got close. I got non-punk bands.

**Amy:** In terms of history, there's the Divinyls.

**Bryce:** I was going to say Chrissy Amphlett.

**Amy:** That's more rock.

**Todd:** More alternative. Another one is Girl Monstar, but they're more poppy. And then they're not quite punk, but they're still really fun—The Gooch Palms.

**Amy:** There's a lot of current bands, female and gender non-conforming led-punk, like BB And The Blips and Hexdebt. They're touring and they're doing cool stuff, but it's more underground, more DIY. I guess the difference with us is we're more flexible to do weirder, more public shit.

**Bryce:** There's a pretty big scene in Melbourne in the moment of all-female bands or female-fronted bands. There are heaps of punk bands coming up recently, which is good.

**Todd:** It's 2018. It's something that should change fundamentally. The thing I also like about picturing you guys as a gang is there's a sense of lawlessness when you play live. So I'm going to give you some quotes and I'd like you to expand on them. Amy, you've said you're responding to the "sunburnt toughness" of music from the '70s. Do you think you guys embody that?

**Bryce:** To a degree, I would think so.

**Gus:** I get sunburnt pretty easily.

**Bryce:** Gus is very pale.

**Gus:** My Tasmanian skin doesn't fare well, especially in this hot Los Angeles sun.... Phwoah, that's a weird one; reference like that. Personally, I don't really compare too much to that sort of stuff. Even though it's kind of huge influence, we look at what we're doing now. I don't really look back that much in that sort of context.

**Todd:** Do you guys agree?

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do, really.**



**Bryce:** A little bit. Me and Amy are from a different place. Australia has a lot of pride in its weather, but Gus is from Tasmania and it's cold there.

**Gus:** From the rain.

**Bryce:** Most of the time. So the sunburnt toughness is kind of more reflective of beaches of Australia, which is a bit more relatable for me and Amy, 'cause we're from a similar part of Australia. I guess. I'm not really sure how that reflects to the '70s, though.

**Todd:** I made the connection from a video, *The Coloured Balls* stuff—Sunbury 1973—people in the crowd look decimated and fried. But the bands on stage are going for it. Bands with resilience, power.

**Bryce:** I guess so. The whole culture of Australia was different back then, I suppose, so it's more reflective of that.

**Todd:** It goes both ways—celebrating toughness but not being shitty.

**Bryce:** In 2018, being part of the world now.

**Amy:** I feel as well, being tough doesn't always just mean being a dickhead. I feel like being tough is always being, "I'm going to beat you up." But being tough as well—it's tougher to be nice to someone 'cause you're really letting your guard down all the time and stuff like that. Toughness isn't always just punching some cunt in the face. Apologizing is pretty fucking brave because being honest is the bravest thing you can do, really.

**Todd:** I agree. I think re-envisioning what toughness is, is very helpful. And getting it from different voices. Talking about toughness Amy, you tore your ACL on stage?

**Amy:** ACL? I tore the cartilage of my left knee on stage. That was bloody awful.

**Todd:** Did you go to the doctor?

**Amy:** So what happened was, it was the first song of our first headline tour in Australia. I bent down and I felt this rip. I was like, "That fucking hurt." Then I stayed out 'til 2 AM, went back to the place we were staying, and I just couldn't sleep. I was in so much pain. I stayed up all night just crying in the backyard. I didn't go to the doctor for two more days, 'cause I thought, "Oh, I just hurt myself. I'm just being a little whinger."

**Todd:** But you were performing two weeks later.

**Amy:** Yeah.

**Todd:** Did you get it repaired?

**Amy:** No, I was meant to get an operation. I went to a couple different doctors and some of them were like, "You need an operation." One was like, "You don't need an operation." I was like, "He's right." [laughs] But I didn't get it and I can do everything. I can bend my knee. It just pops and grinds.

**Todd:** I know none of you are Declan, but maybe you can help fill in the spots. This is a direct quote. He's of the mindset, "That I've only got the tools and what I've heard in, let's say 1975.... so I imagine what's going to happen in the future and be that person, in the past, who sparks that.... I imagine I'm in 1980 and I'm about to change the path of rock'n'roll..."

**All:** [laughter]

**Bryce:** That sounds like Declan.

**Amy:** He's got some big statements.

**Gus:** I don't even know what that meant.

**Amy:** That goes in and out and then back in again.

**Todd:** I don't want to put words in his mouth, but it may be something like this. You see a time in rock'n'roll that you really liked, and then you go back into it, not only with the sound, but taking another path, making other decisions. Some of the best contemporary bands can do that. The problem is people just replicate the sounds and that sucks. It's not that exciting. Punk, for me, isn't "progressive" music. It's looking at different possibilities and bringing excitement and energy.

**Amy:** Just from other conversations I've had with Declan, it's probably along the lines that he sees 2018 as very electronic music, like trap, Drake, Cardi B—I love Cardi B—techno, and whatever. He sees it when rock and punk came out, it was so, "Fuck you, we're crazy." He wants to bring rock back into popular culture, I guess.

**Todd:** Spirit-wise, I put Amy! And The Sniffers close to the Cosmic Psychos, who are very blunt but super interesting—Ross (lead singer, farmer) and his ex-girlfriend and S&M lady (Whitney Ward)...

**Amy:** We actually met her the other night. She came to our gig. She was fuckin' awesome. She was buying us all drinks. She looks at Gus, and she goes, "Man, this is just taking me back to when I first met Ross."

**Todd:** How'd that feel, Gus?

**Gus:** It was good. Good time. It was nice to meet her. Very lovely lady.

**Todd:** Amy, you were also in a Cosmic Psychos video. Is Ross still a weight lifter?

**Amy:** Yeah, he is. So that video I was in, "Better in the Shed," he literally just weight lifts. That's all his outfits, all his gear.

**Todd:** He was wearing a singlet.... Speaking of costumes, Amy, did you wear a Vegemite costume as a child?

**Amy:** No, are you talking about that photo?

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Amy:** That's my Mum. That was one of the first times she went to a party with my Dad, when she was younger. It was an Australia-themed party. She was told it was dress-up. She had a bed sheet that was Vegemite, so she sewed it into Vegemite jar. So, if you imagine a bed sheet that's sewn into a cylinder, and then put on. She gets to the party and nobody else is dressed up. [laughter] So she just had to wear this fucking Vegemite costume. It's pretty funny.

**Todd:** Another serious question. What representations have you resisted from others trying to mold you as a band or as a person? Because some of the power—I'm thinking of the music industry, larger structures—how people want to package you. Or people say, "If you did this, this, and this." Or "Don't fucking swear anymore." Or "make the guitars less mean; put it to the 'nice' setting."

**Amy:** For me, as a female, they are automatically like, "Oh, you're a star." "Oh, you're Debbie Harry." "Do you want to do

modeling stuff?" That sort of stuff, it always comes down to looks. "You're so sexy." I'm not even conscious of how I present myself. Straight from brain to mouth. Or straight from hand to getting dressed. For me, it's been important to resist the glossiness of the music industry that they put a lot of chicks in. There's a lot of comparisons. I don't know if it's just a frontperson thing or if it's specifically for females, but it's always, "You're a blonde frontperson. You must be Debbie Harry." Of course I like Debbie Harry, but we're worlds fucking apart.

**Todd:** Would they say that to someone who's doing an energetic live show and they were male—because there's a much bigger pool to grab from? "Oh, you're like Iggy Pop," or just go down the line. Again, it's so shitty that the music industry has such a small pool.

**Gus:** Personally, I don't really feel much pressure at all. We are who we are and doing our thing. I'm not looked at any near as much as Amy, or recognized. I'm not the face of the band, so I'm on the back step, least as a live performance.

**Bryce:** Nobody really wants to talk to the drummer. [laughter]

**Gus:** Only a few more people want to talk to me. [laughter] A lot more to Declan and lot more to Amy. So we're on the lower spectrum.

**Amy:** Just staring out the window.... We really make sure we work people who we trust and like and who get us. You could easily work with some schwank-ass schwank and they'd be, "Fucking do this." We work with people who are our mates. We're in a spot now. I do most of the emails, but there are people hitting us up where it's sort of like foreign territory. With the overseas stuff—*NME* or the bigger stuff—does that reflect us? Being in that; is that us or is that not us? So that's where it's funny because it's all new and we're all learning new stuff. We just have to dip our toes in and see if it does fit with us, or doesn't.

**Todd:** I'm fully aware that I've invited you into the backyard of a house in Los Angeles, sight unseen.

**Amy:** Sometimes it just fits right and you'll feel right. "Hell fuckin' yeah." And other times, you're like, "Who the fuck are you?"

**Todd:** When your name came up, a lot of times, *The Runaways* come up. The part that really creeps me out about *The Runaways* was how they were managed. Amazing musicians. Really talented artists, all of them. But how they were packaged and promoted, it still makes me queasy.

**Amy:** So weird, yeah.

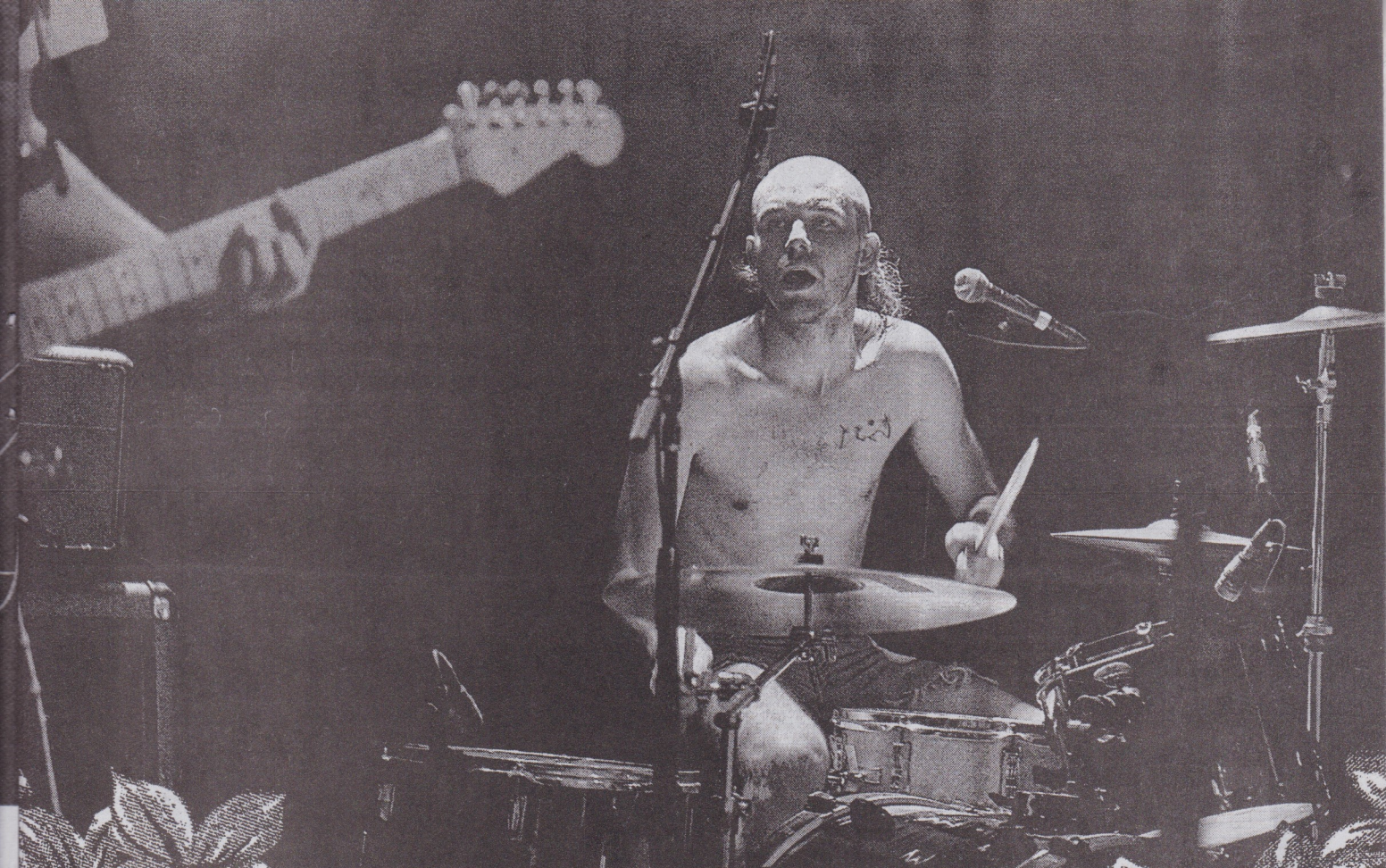
**Todd:** It's pedophilia.

**Amy:** Yeah.

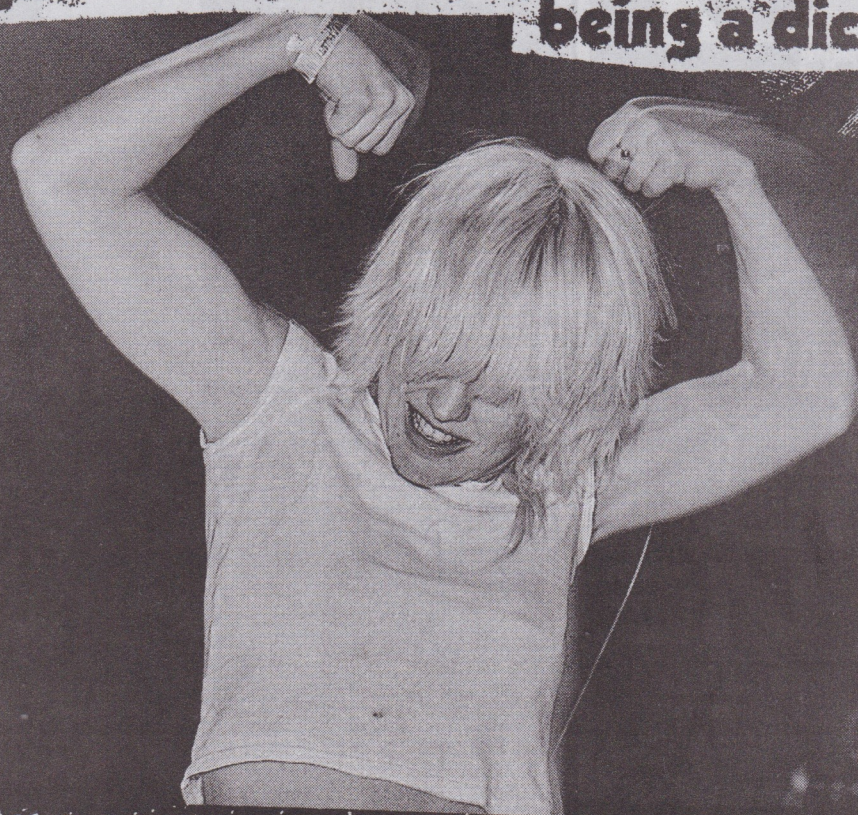
**Todd:** When *The Runaways* first started, they were all under eighteen. When I'm talking about representation—that's great that they're an all-female band, but how they were packaged. It didn't mention brains or talent, but they sure are nice to look at. To me, it's entirely sad.

**Amy:** It's so weird because Lita Ford is such an amazing guitarist. They're all so badass and powerful. But the way they were





**being tough doesn't always just mean  
being a dickhead.**





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shown to the world was, "We're so weak and little and sexy." It's like they wanted to be represented as not powerful by whoever was in charge.

**Todd:** The Runaways, in print ads, were promoted as "jailbait." Fuck me.

**Gus:** Really? Crazy.

**Bryce:** That's fucked.

**Todd:** So, Amy you become in charge of it.

**Amy:** I feel like that if that was something that they were like, "This is who we want to be and this is what we want to be shown as," that's fucking awesome because it's good to take your sexuality and all that in your own hands. But, because it wasn't that, it was the other way around. That's so fucking weird.

**Todd:** Let's get to your second EP, *Big Attraction*. How did you find that song?

**Amy:** By the U.K. Subs?

**Todd:** Yeah.

**Amy:** Declan actually showed me. I don't know how he knew it. It's such a fucking banger. And the lyrics are so good. [sings] "All I want is a little bit of action / but you

can't take five in this limo life / so what's the big attraction." We actually met the singer, he came to our show.

**Todd:** Charlie Harper?

**Amy:** Yeah. Two weeks ago, in the U.K. we made a posting about the song and one of his mates seen it. He came along to the show and he said, "That's really funny that you chose that song because I wrote that song about an interview I saw with Debbie Harry." She mentioned the term "limo life," and he thought it was really interesting, so he wrote a song about it.

**Todd:** What I found out today is that it actually was an Urban Dogs song prior to a U.K. Subs song. Charlie Harper was in Urban Dogs and it was only a demo for the U.K. Subs and was only released in compilations afterwards. That's a weird, great song to pick up on. Would you ever cover it?

**Amy:** Fuck yeah.

**Bryce:** I've never heard the song before.

**Todd:** I actually like the Urban Dogs version better. You can find it on Discogs... I just

want to bring up an Australian band that I love—one of its first punk bands—The Saints. Do they play any role with Amy! And The Sniffers?

**Bryce:** They don't have a great influence on me.

**Todd:** Or just appreciation?

**Bryce:** I don't really know a great deal about them, to be honest.

**Amy:** I really like The Saints and enjoy them. I like their sound. They're good.

**Bryce:** Every time in the U.K., I get so many people coming up to me, asking if we know The Saints and if we're influenced by The Saints.

**Amy:** They're such an important Australian punk band. One of the main ones.

**Todd:** The Saints were able to go to the U.K. in 1977 and play. And another thing I do like about The Saints, besides what they sound like, they didn't dress the parts of U.K. punks. They looked—not normal—but they didn't play to their audience that way. I think of you guys. You don't look normal. I wouldn't think, "You're all going

as a female, they are automatically like,

"Oh, you're a star."

"Oh, you're Debbie Harry."

"Do you want to do modeling stuff?"

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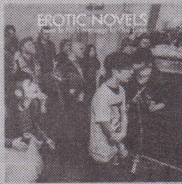
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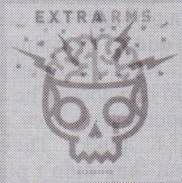
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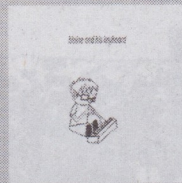
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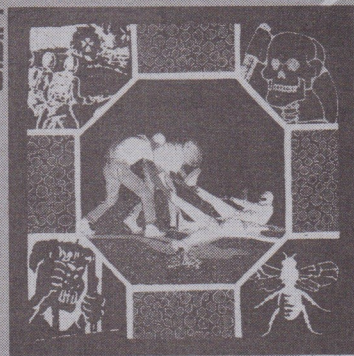


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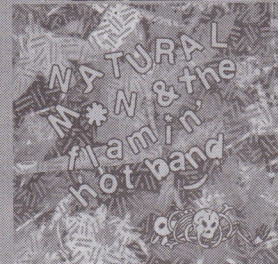
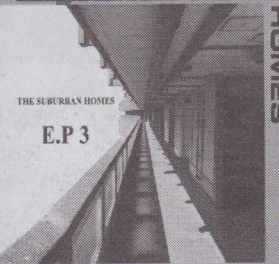
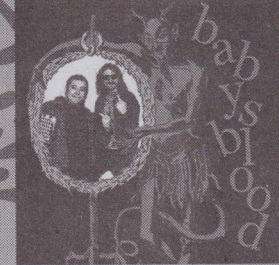
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to the office today," but I don't think you look super punk.

**Amy:** It's very casual. A lot of Australian punk bands, we're probably on the outside of that circle, wear just shirt and jeans. They just have hair. They don't look crazy.

**Gus:** Everyone's not super studded leather jacket and a mohawk.

**Amy:** And proud we don't wear anything crazy. We're just chillin'. I love my boots.

**Todd:** I think I read that you said, "In Australia, things are more written on a chalkboard than put up in lights."

**Amy:** Yeah.

**Bryce:** That's a good one.

**Todd:** This one's a topic that's near and dear to my heart because the same thing happened to me. What type of bike got stolen? (Referring to the song, "Push Bike.")

**Amy:** [laughs] There's a story behind it. There's a Melbourne band called WOD, which stands for Weapon Of Destruction. They have a song called, "I Stole Your Push Bike." When we were in the room for four hours, I was like, "We should do a reply to that, saying someone stole my push bike." And then we did. A couple months later, some guy came into our front yard—just some street urchin came in when Bryce was home and actually tried to steal my bike.

**Bryce:** I was standing right inside the door. He tried to walk in and pick up the bike. I walked out and was like, "What are you doing?" And he's like, "I'm just checking the tires. Making sure they're pumped up." I'm like, "No you fuckin' aren't."

**Amy:** It sort of like I manifested it.

**Todd:** We don't call them push bikes here. We call them bicycles. What would be a non-push bike?

**Gus:** Motorbike. Road bike. BMX bike. Mountain bike.

**Todd:** What's a push bike, then?

**Gus:** Run of the mill. No frills. Takes you from A to B. Pushy.

**Amy:** Pushy for the bushy.

**Todd:** Why not pedal?

**Amy:** Because they always break. You gotta push them. Kidding. I don't know why.

**Todd:** So, you've said that America seems like a C-grade movie set.

**Amy:** Yeah, it does.

**Todd:** Give me a time that was the most

prototypical, like, "Holy fuck, it feels like I'm in a movie."

**Amy:** Bloody everything, because in Australia all of our television—pretty much except for a small handful—is American. It's weird because to you guys it's normal, but to us it's a TV show.

**Bryce:** It's a faraway land.

**Gus:** Every little bit.

**Todd:** Just in Los Angeles, the further west, the more it seems like a movie to me.

**Amy:** We don't have diners and there's some bloody woman with a bloody shirt on, being like [in Southern accent] "You want more coffee." Chewing gum. You're like, "What the hell is this?" Or in the South when they say, "How you doin' sweetheart?"

**Bryce:** "Y'all in a band or somethin'?" Tipping at a bar.

**Gus:** That's a weird one. We don't do that in Australia.

**Todd:** Because you have socialized medicine.

**Gus:** Our workers get paid properly.

**Amy:** It's hard work.

**Gus:** It's always hard to know how much to tip. What to do.

**Todd:** I used to have a little card. Very helpful. The more you drink—the less math.

**Amy:** Nice. Smart beers.

**Todd:** Gus, what does the T.C. stand for on your stick and poke tattoo?

**Gus:** Total Control.

**Todd:** What's your other one?

**Amy:** Whip your pants down.

**Gus:** Case, which is Bryce's middle name, 'cause I got drunk one night and Bryce's girlfriend's done both the pokes. Actually, Bryce did the T.C. I dunno. We were drunk.

**Todd:** The "Mum" one.

**Gus:** She did "Mum" on me. Bryce was supposed to get "Fergus," because that's my name. When that happened, we ran out of ink so he could not reciprocate the tattoo.

**Todd:** So, the song "Westgate," I'm assuming it's not about the Westgate Bridge collapsing in 1970 and killing thirty-five workers.

**Amy and Bryce:** No.

**Amy:** It's about Bryce getting dumped, actually.

**Bryce:** Sad.

**Amy:** Also it works because the Westgate Bridge—kinda heavy—but a lot people commit suicide off there. That's not what it's about.

**Bryce:** [clears throat] Sorry, choking up. I broke up with my girlfriend, who is my current girlfriend now. We got back together and we're very happy. [laughs] I was really sad. I was just listening to lots of Hank Williams, so I walked from our house at the time which was in St. Kilda to the Westgate.

**Amy:** Not to kill himself.

**Bryce:** Just because I was walking and didn't stop. It's about six kilometers. Just me walking to the Westgate being sad. [nervously chuckles]

**Todd:** You're touring a lot. In the spirit of being away from family and your peer group, what's something new that you discovered about your personality?

**Gus:** Probably that I'm more irresponsible than I thought I was. Being a drongo. I show up most of the time. Drinking.

**Bryce:** I really miss driving myself because we just had TMs (tour managers) driving the whole time. But I think that comes from me wanting control. I guess I'm a bit of a control freak in some aspects. When we started the tour, when somebody's driving, I would push my feet down, pretending to break. I'd do the steering wheel, but with my hands down, in my head just driving the car. But I haven't done that recently, so I've kind of let go of it.

**Amy:** Probably that I'm a real whinger—I'll whinge about anything and everything.

**Gus:** You're not a real whinger. I'm a whinger.

**Bryce:** We're all whingers.

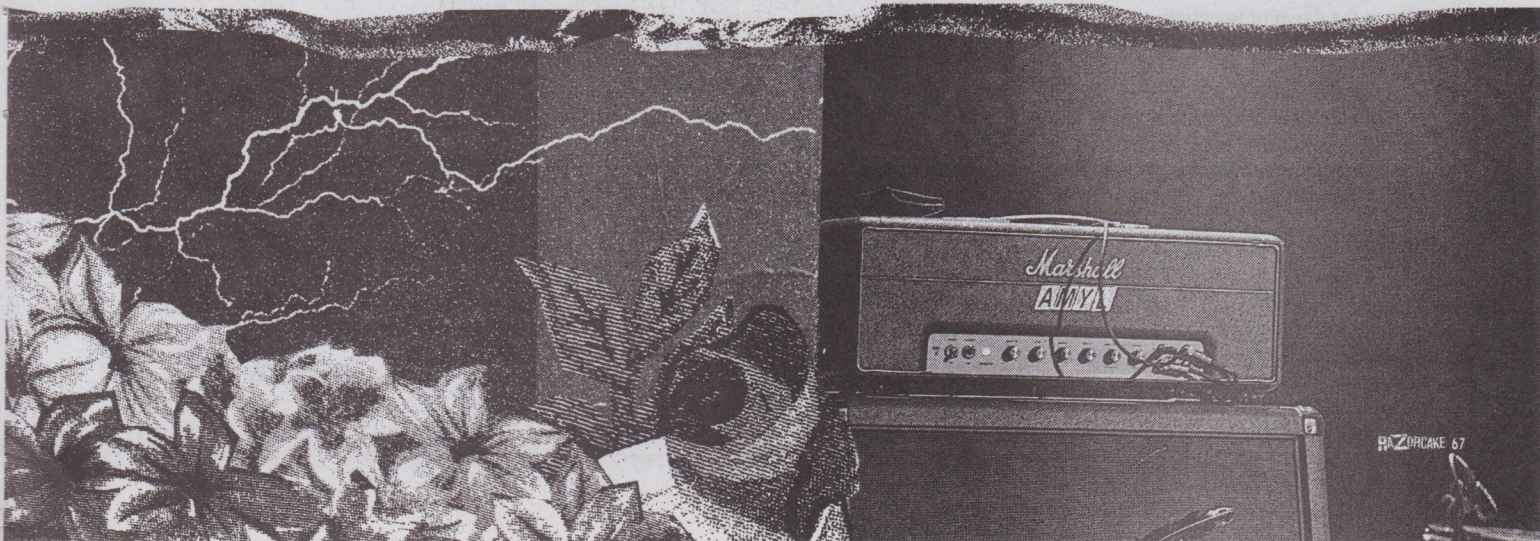
**Gus:** We're all goddamn whingers.

**Amy:** Now I've lost my answer. It's hard to know when you're in it. I feel like I'll look back in three years and be like, "Oh, I was really like this then." I like to sleep a lot. I'll sleep all day in the car. I haven't had any huge epiphanies or breakthroughs.

**Gus:** No breakthroughs, only breakdowns. [to Amy] I'm not directing that at you. All of us.

**Amy:** It's a tough question. It's good to reflect.

**Bryce:** It's getting very real.





# ONE PUNK'S GUIDE TO FREE JAZZ

BY MIKE FALOON

LAYOUT BY LAUREN DENITZIO

**"THE WEIRDOS OF AMERICA  
HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IGNORED  
BUT HAVE ALWAYS MADE  
GREAT SHIT HAPPEN."**

**—TAYLOR HO BYNUM<sup>1</sup>**

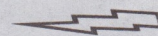
Emerging at the dawn of twentieth century, no one knows exactly who started jazz or precisely when it started. But all paths lead to African-Americans, specifically black Creoles, living in Jim Crow New Orleans. Using rhythms and melodies from Africa and the Caribbean, they drew on ragtime, blues, marches, work songs, spirituals, and waltzes.

As with any great leap forward, particularly one emanating within an oppressed and ostracized community, jazz met with

resistance from the outset. Opponents spewed racist and classist arguments, decrying the music's "bad taste" and claiming this African-American art form posed a threat to "middle class" (nay, white) values. Meanwhile, a number of white musicians formed their own bands, co-opting the sounds of their African-American contemporaries. Some went a step further and had the audacity to claim credit for creating jazz.

But as we'd later see with rock'n'roll, punk, and hip hop, the gatekeepers didn't wield all the power. Jazz spread rapidly: Chicago, New York, Kansas City, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and countless cities in between. Across the decades, attempts to denigrate jazz and its creators persisted (and persist), but over time a jazz cannon emerged. Jelly Roll Morton. Louis Armstrong. Duke Ellington. Billie Holiday. Charlie Parker. Miles Davis. John Coltrane. These iconic figures and many others faced countless obstacles as they defined and refined America's greatest artistic contribution to world culture.

And they're just the start of the story. Jazz has evolved in many directions since. I would argue the most compelling of these subgenres is free jazz. Most renderings of jazz history give short shrift, if any consideration at all, to free jazz. Most read like a history of punk that skips from the Sex Pistols to Nirvana and ends with Green Day. Much of the best punk exists beyond the common narrative. The same holds true for jazz.



From a scene in *The Office*. Angela has just realized her husband is having an affair with a coworker.

**Angela:** I feel so stupid.

**Dwight:** You're not stupid. Jazz is stupid.

**Angela:** Jazz *is* stupid. Why don't they play the right notes?



<sup>1</sup> This and subsequent quotes from Taylor Ho Bynum come from episode 147 of Jeremiah Cymerman's podcast, "5049."







Lisa Mezzacappa, avantNOIR | MYLES BOISEN

Jazz often serves as a punch line, cultural shorthand for a number of stereotypes. *Jazz is pretentious. Jazz is too complicated. Jazz is boring.* Meanwhile, the music can elicit negative images of its fans, from the finger-snapping, beret-wearing beatnik, to the yuppie, know-it-all with a turntable that costs more than a used car.

Jazz and its followers, at their worst, can sink to these clichés. But jazz, at its best, thrives far beyond mainstream aesthetics and commercial considerations. And in my experience, it's made by thoughtful, grounded people who encounter many of the same obstacles as their counterparts in other parts of the cultural underground, like where to put on shows and how to find reliable record labels and distribution.

The prospect of wading in can be daunting. Having a trustworthy guide is invaluable. Mine was a high school friend, Jeff. He was only a year older but already developed an expansive knowledge of music. He introduced me to '50s classics such as

## THE BEST PUNK EXISTS BEYOND THE COMMON NARRATIVE. THE SAME HOLDS TRUE FOR JAZZ.

Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*—soothing and pretty—and '70s gems like Stanley Clarke's *Schooldays*, inspired by funk and rock. Jeff also steered me away from the smooth jazz of the era, the '80s bands that smiled too much and sleepwalked through sounds best suited for mimosa-soaked Sunday brunches.

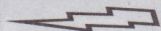
I heard a few records I liked, but didn't latch on to any particular musicians. I appreciated Jeff's passion, but also knew he was a talented bassist and a quick study. I figured his

understanding was largely rooted in being able to play the music, speak the language. He could hear things I couldn't. The seeds of curiosity were planted, but I also started to contend with some of the stereotypes, specifically of jazz fans.

At the time I played in a cover band, King Otter And The Electric Flem. One time we closed a backyard party with the Kinks' "You Really Got Me." I loved the song. Still do. It's easy to play and so satisfying.

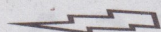


After we finished, a friend—his head full of jazz guitarists like Pat Metheny and Al Di Meola—asked to borrow a guitar. He scoffed at “You Really Got Me.” He mocked the song—and, by extension, us—for being so simple. Then he started noodling. He fired off lots of notes in rapid succession. His playing was impressive, required a lot of dexterity, but it didn’t register. It was like someone mistaking a large vocabulary for good story telling. I thought he was judging unfairly, being a typical jazz fan (not that I knew many), mistaking the quantity of notes for the quality of the music. In this case, though, it was probably more a function of age, the folly of youth, but he confirmed my sense of jazz fans being snobs.



**“IF YOU GO BACK, THERE ARE WEIRD, TRIPPY RECORDS. THAT’S WHEN PEOPLE YOU MET (IN THE LATE ‘70S SCENE) HAD DEEP KNOWLEDGE OF OBSCURE, TRIPPY MUSICS. RAYMOND PETTIBON TAUGHT ME SO MUCH. HE BROUGHT ME TO MY FIRST BEBOP GIG. HE PLAYS ME (JOHN COLTRANE’S) ASCENSION. I THOUGHT JOHN COLTRANE WAS STILL ALIVE. I THOUGHT HE WAS A PUNK ROCKER, AN OLDER ONE. IT WAS LIKE A NERVOUS GENDER GIG, GERMS. TOTALLY WILD.”**

**—MIKE WATT<sup>2</sup>**



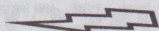
My college radio station played jazz in the afternoon. I DJ’d on nights and weekends and occasionally filled in on the jazz show. I was fumbling in the dark but remembered some of the names Jeff introduced to me. My default was to find the longest song on each record, so I’d have fewer songs to choose.

Records like John Coltrane’s *Giant Steps* and Herbie Hancock’s *Maiden Voyage* started coming into focus. Other records were as baffling as they were intriguing. Ornette Coleman’s *Free Jazz: A Collective Improvisation*, for example, is a perplexing, thought-provoking record. Recorded in late

# I STARTED TO HEAR THE GREY AREAS, EVEN IF I WAS STILL MYSTIFIED. PHAROAH SANDERS WAS AN ACQUIRED TASTE BUT HIS MUSIC DIDN’T FEEL LIKE WORK. IT FELT LIKE RELEASE.

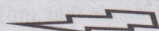
1960, Coleman led a double quartet of two saxes, trumpets, bassists, and drummers. They played live to tape with no written parts or songs. They played for thirty-seven minutes. Half went on side one. Half became side two. Pure improvisation. An eight-person conversation. *Free Jazz* isn’t the best of the genre—or even the pinnacle of Coleman’s career—but it’s riveting. There were fewer melodies and less repetition than I was used to. Plus, I had no context for how or why anyone would embark on such an endeavor, but I admired the audacity. It was like performance art, like Andy Kaufman’s bizarre wrestling sketches, and I was left wondering how much was about expression and how much was about provocation.

I thought I was starting to figure out jazz but I wasn’t fooling anyone. One afternoon, I introduced side one of *Free Jazz* by “Ornate Coleman.” I didn’t realize my mistake until a very patient listener called in to correct me.



**“I’VE ALWAYS SAID WE DON’T HAVE TO COMPROMISE THIS MUSIC AT ALL. WE DON’T HAVE TO DO ANYTHING TO SWEETEN IT, MAKE IT MORE PALATABLE TO MAINSTREAM SENSIBILITIES. WE JUST HAVE TO PRESENT IT AS OUR ART, AS IT IS, AND PEOPLE WITH EARS ARE GOING TO HEAR IT.”**

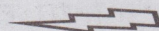
**—JAMES KEEPNEWS, QUOTING DRUMMER ANDREW CYRILLE<sup>3</sup>**



At the time, I would have said I liked jazz but didn’t understand it. It was like my perception of wine, an acquired taste, something I associated with the worst aspects

of adulthood—resignation and responsibility. To me, this meant a lot of work and more projected joy than actual satisfaction. I thought the music’s true meanings were beyond my reach and any attempts to crack the codes would leave me flailing while being held at arm’s length, like Curly trying in vain to scrap with Moe.

I assumed there were definitive meanings to be extracted, certain things I was supposed to understand. I felt like real aficionados readily understood these things and would quickly realize that I did not. This was more a function of my insecurities and projections than actual experiences. I’d once felt the same way about punk. But punk comes right at me, offering lyrics, rhythms, and melodies that I usually connect with immediately. Jazz can be equally provocative, equally stimulating, but more circuitous. Not better or worse, just different paths.



Everything changed with Pharoah Sanders, a saxophonist who moved from Arkansas to New York by way of Oakland in the early ‘60s. He played with Sun Ra and came to greater prominence with John Coltrane. I recognized his name, which I associated with the most adventurous of musicians, someone who I perceived to be truly out there. At a used record store, I found a double album “best of.” Gatefold. Ten dollars. The combination of mystery, legend, aesthetics, and price was irresistible. The first passes through the record were rough. I liked parts but didn’t get far with the shrieking and honking, the seeming totality of atonality. Over time, though, Sanders’ range came into focus, the beauty and cacophony, sometimes alternating, others simultaneous. Meanwhile, the percussion swirled. It didn’t move straight ahead, it didn’t push like the drumming I was used to. The rhythms supported, lifted, hovered, and floated, weren’t concerned about moving forward in time, about completing a task from start to finish. Maybe there were meanings to be



deciphered, intentions to be decoded, maybe not. It wasn't as binary as I'd led myself to believe. I started to hear the grey areas, even if I was still mystified. Pharoah Sanders was an acquired taste but his music didn't feel like work. It felt like release.

I'd found my way back to free jazz, also known as creative music or improvised or spontaneous or out or instantly composed. Or energy music or the new thing, or any of the other labels that have been slapped on and peeled off over the years. Monikers aside, I was more receptive than I'd been before. Sanders offered a fascinating mix of composition and improvisation, the planned and the spontaneous. Jazz had always blended, composed, and improvised parts to varying extents, but free jazz—which emerged in the late '50s and bloomed throughout the '60s and beyond—puts different combinations in play, pushes in different directions, incorporates a broader range of tones, rhythms, and meters. Pharoah Sanders led me to other giants of the era including Anthony Braxton, Archie Shepp, Grachan Moncur, and Joe McPhee. And I can't leave out drummers such as Andrew Cyrille and Sunny Murray. Most drummers strive to keep time, but Cyrille and Murray, among others, sought to untether their playing from conventional time in favor of more abstract rhythms. Valerie Wilmer, writing about Murray, said it really well in her book *As Serious as Your Life*: "(His) aim was to free the soloist completely from restrictions of time, and to do this he set up a continual hailstorm of percussion."

**"THE HISTORY OF THIS CREATIVE MUSIC WAS PEOPLE MAKING (MUSIC) FOR THEMSELVES. THE MUSIC WAS NOT ABOUT A SET OF PATTERNS YOU PLAY OVER A CERTAIN KIND OF CHORD CHANGES, BUT WAS A PROCESS OF COMMITTED SELF-DISCOVERY, CULTURAL EXAMINATION, AND REVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT."**

—TAYLOR HO BYNUM

Over the course of the '60s and into the '70s, many jazz musicians, like a lot of counterparts in rock, made a play for the mainstream—exposed chest hair, fusion, arenas—diluting their sounds in pursuit of bigger paychecks and wider acceptance. But free jazz musicians were less inclined to view their music as a primarily commercial enterprise. During this time, a number of black music collectives started across the country. Bill Dixon founded the Jazz Composers Guild in New York, which



Adam Matlock at Soup and Sound, Brooklyn | ANDREW DRURY

## IMPROVISED MUSIC IS LIKE CONVERSATION. GOOD CONVERSATIONS AREN'T SCRIPTED.

sought to work collectively when dealing with club owners and promoting shows, and, later, the Free Conservatory of the University of the Streets, which focused on teaching music to young people. In St. Louis, the Black Artist Group included poets, painters, and actors along with musicians. According to Todd Jenkins's *Free Jazz and Free Improvisation*, the BAG's headquarters included "classrooms, performance and rehearsal spaces, and dormitories." In Chicago, a group of musicians founded the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians in 1965. In 2015, the AACM celebrated fifty years of "nurturing, performing, and recording serious, original music"<sup>4</sup> with a four hour concert at Mandel Hall in Chicago.

**"I USE THE TERM FREE MUSIC. FREE FROM ANY INDUSTRY, INSTITUTIONAL, OR CRITICAL OVERSIGHT."** —JOE MORRIS<sup>5</sup>

I'm just starting to explore those black music collectives. Likewise for the loft scene of the

'70s, a time when musicians in New York City created their own spaces, set up their own shows, and released their own records. Out of necessity, they took into their own hands more of the means of making and promoting their music—and all of the work that came with it. Pianist Cooper-Moore sealed cracks in the walls of his band's unheated, four story building at 501 Canal Street. Saxophonist Sam Rivers and his wife Bea Rivers ran the performance space Studio Rivbea on Bond Street. Juice Glover, an electrician by trade, held regular sessions at his place, The Firehouse Theatre, on East Eleventh Street.

It's no coincidence jazz pushed the boundaries so far and so fast during the civil rights era, but motivations were multifaceted. Writing for the *New York Review of Books*, Adam Shatz described how there was a "misleading tendency to analyze jazz, especially formally adventurous, 'free' or avant-garde jazz, as some kind of direct expression of radical politics: the cry of urban rage or the voice of the black revolution. Questions of aesthetics, of the painstaking choices people made when crafting their art, went out the door."<sup>6</sup>

4 [aacmchicago.org/about/](http://aacmchicago.org/about/)  
5 Interview with the author

6 "Jazz and the Images That Hold Us Captive," Adam Shatz, *New York Review of Books*, June 17, 2018





James Brandon Lewis, Warren Trae Crudup III, Luke Stewart at Quinn's | MICHAEL BOGDANFFY-KRIEGH

Anger and other emotions were part of the equation, but reducing musicians' motivations to just these factors diminishes their intellect and intentions, among other things. It's not surprising perceptions of jazz and its creators are often simplified. Jazz is an African-American art form and most of its innovators have been black men. There continues to be trouble accepting black men in multiple, sophisticated roles, especially when "composer" is one of those roles.

Composers are held in the highest regard in Eurocentric music. They write the tunes. They pen the script everyone follows. Western tradition is locked into music being written, planned, rehearsed. Through this lens, people often believe improvised music is lesser because it merges those parts—to varying extents the writing happens as the performance unfolds, as if what's spontaneous is inherently inferior to what's mapped out.

I used to be baffled by the idea of improvised music. I've tried playing drums for years. I can barely fumble through simple songs I've rehearsed dozens of times. I can't imagine participating in spontaneous composition that would appeal to an audience. Improvised music is like conversation. Good conversations aren't scripted. We may think of what we want to say beforehand, consider topics to bring up, jokes to share, phrases to include, but we listen and respond in the moment.

“(Braxton) was saying it's O.K. to be a black composer in your own way, and to develop your own language, and to also write about it, to find a way to communicate it to the public, so that you won't go down in history as being defined by someone else.” —Tyshawn Sorey, multi-instrumentalist, composer, talking about Anthony Braxton<sup>7</sup>

In the '70s, Anthony Braxton, a saxophonist, composer, and teacher, developed his own ways of notating and naming his songs. He devised a unique system of letters, numbers, shapes, and lines. Traditional notes and staves didn't convey all he was expressing. His song titles can resemble schematics or blueprints. While Braxton was accepted as a jazz musician, his work—which didn't fit the mold—was met with widespread resistance and confusion. “I can't get my orchestra music out, I can't get my chamber music out,” Braxton told writer Graham Lock in the 1988 book *Forces in Motion*. Variations of this typecasting persist. Tyshawn Sorey is an accomplished drummer, pianist, and trombonist. He has a doctorate from

<sup>7</sup> “Is It Jazz? Improvisation? Tyshawn Sorey Is Obliterating the Lines,” Giovanni Russonello, *New York Times*, August 2, 2017

Columbia and is a professor at Wesleyan. He's composed jazz pieces and operas. Despite these and other credentials, he feels he is pigeonholed as “just” a drummer.

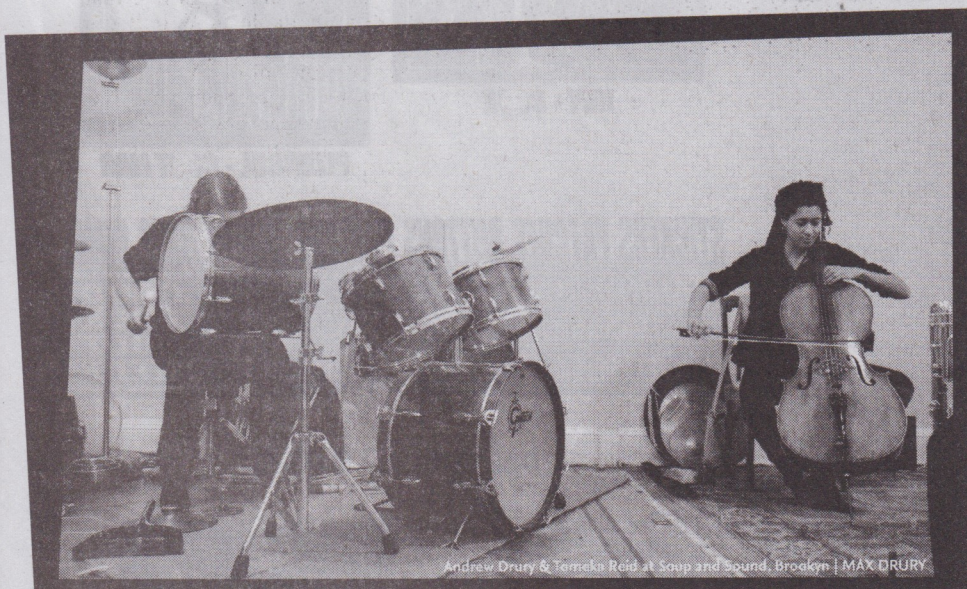
**“I DON'T THINK IT'S LIKELY THAT MODELING A KIND OF MUSIC THAT ENCOURAGES INTERGENERATIONAL, INTERCULTURAL, NON-HIERARCHICAL DIALOGUE, AND CREATIVE THINKING IS ACTUALLY GOING TO CREATE A POLITICAL SYSTEM THAT MIRRORS THAT, BUT IT'S LIKE THE SEVEN SAMURAI. THEY KNEW THEY WERE GOING TO LOSE, AND EVEN IF THEY WON, HALF OF THEM WOULD BE DEAD AND THE VILLAGERS WOULD HATE THEM, BUT YOU GOTTA FIGHT ANYWAY, YOU TAKE ON THE BANDITS.”**

**—TAYLOR HO BYNUM**

Looking back on the history is interesting. Following the current scene is even better. There's a golden era of free jazz records,



I SUGGEST FOLLOWING SPECIFIC MUSICIANS LIKE SOME PEOPLE FOLLOW CERTAIN DIRECTORS OR ACTORS. KNOWING THE CAST AND/OR CREATORS IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE GENRE. OVER TIME YOU'LL FIGURE OUT WHO YOU TRUST.



Andrew Drury & Tameko Reid at Soup and Sound, Brooklyn | MAX DRURY

which I'll come back to shortly. The gateway is live performances. I stumbled across a weekly series of live shows at Quinn's, a diner-turned-club, in a neighboring town. It seemed too good to last. I've learned from punk that reliable venues tend to be short-lived and should be relished while they're active, so I went as often as possible.

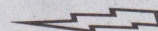
The live shows at Quinn's heightened my appreciation for free jazz. It was seeing Joe McPhee for the first time, playing with the late Dominic Duval, sax and bass so subtle and subdued that I had to lean closer before McPhee ripped through, reached for the highest end of his register and beyond, and blew blustery clouds of atonality. It was being there as trumpet player Jaimie Branch closed her eyes, tilted her head, and propelled a series of delicate, prolonged notes that conjured colors I never before could conceive. It was witnessing two frat boys walk in half way through a James Brandon Lewis sax solo. Talking as they crossed the room, they were oblivious to Lewis. They also confirmed my assumptions about white dudes with collared shirts and ball caps. They continued yammering

as Lewis ramped up, facing his bandmates, his back to the audience, louder, more frantic, and laser focused. The frat dudes approached the counter and before the words "Bud Lite" could pass their lips, Lewis connected and their faces lit up with the same *Holy shit!* looks the rest of us wore. Much of the appeal in seeing improvised music is seeing everything between the notes, witnessing the means and the ends, the deliberations and decisions, the wincing and grimacing and reaching.

"Most people don't live in a place where interesting things happen frequently. Invariably, in all of these places, there is a small clutch of people who are absolutely dedicated to making their community more fun and exciting. They just want to do their part and make the place where they live a little less drab and soul crushing. This is a constant. These are the people who start bands and put on shows and form roller derby leagues and run little record labels out of their kitchen and all manner of other constructive activities. Generally, they make no money.

They struggle against daunting odds, just so their community has sounds other than the monotonous churn of factory equipment and the mundane clack of computer keyboards one cubicle over, and sights other than Subway signs and Chevy dealerships."<sup>8</sup>

—Rev. Nørb, writer, musician

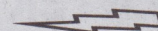


James Keepnews and Steve Ventura are among that small clutch of people. They built the scene at Quinn's that came to mean so much to me. They're enthusiastic and eager to share their knowledge, quite unlike my initial assumptions about jazz fans. They're like activists in their drive to promote the music they revere. And they're not alone. Bassist Michael Bisio and his wife Dawn Bisio host shows in the community room of their apartment building in Kingston, N.Y. Drummer Andrew Drury hosts the Soup and Sound series at his Brooklyn apartment. He makes and serves soup before each show. In each case people are putting on amazing, affordable shows in accessible settings.



**"PEOPLE ASK, 'DO YOU MAKE ANY MONEY?' WILL IT BE HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT? MY ANSWER IS, 'SCREW YOU.' IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO GET TO THAT."**<sup>9</sup>

—JOE MORRIS, GUITARIST, COMPOSER



Then there are the records. A few years ago, just as I was wrapping my head around Pharoah Sanders, in the depths of an endless Northeast winter in which the snow piled ever higher and my back ached ever more

<sup>8</sup> Nørb originally posted this on social media. It's also included in *The Other Night at Quinn's* (Razorcake/Gorsky, 2018).

<sup>9</sup> Interview with author



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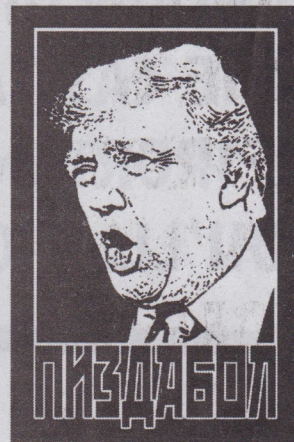
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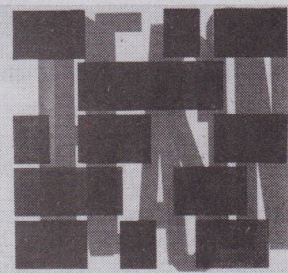
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# THERE ARE FEW THINGS IN THIS LIFE AS INVIGORATING AS UNCOMPROMISING MUSIC THAT RESPECTS YOUR INTELLIGENCE, DOESN'T LAY OUT EVERYTHING IN A "PAINT-BY-NUMBERS" FORMAT, AND LEAVES YOU WITH SOME WORK TO DO.



Michael Bisio & Joe McPhee at Binnacle Books | BRETT ESSLER

from the shoveling, I wanted new sounds while working outside. A *Village Voice* "Best of the Year" poll led me to Lisa Mezzacappa's *What Is Known?* and Mary Halvorson's *Saturn Sings*.

Lisa Mezzacappa is a San Francisco-based bassist. *What Is Known?* has a real spark and crackle. There's a punk-like energy, especially in John Finkbeiner's guitar, but Mezzacappa's songs are more sinuous. (I later learned Finkbeiner was in Mike Lucas's *Knights Of The New Crusade*.)

Mary Halvorson is a guitarist based in NYC. She is small in stature and her glasses evoke the look of a librarian, but she wields an enormous hollow body guitar with an even bigger sound. *Saturn Sings* is sweeping and melodic at times. Other times Halvorson plays with distress signal urgency, surfing through exhilarating fretboard dances that evolve into freeform freakouts, on the precipice of being too much to ingest. Then she jump cuts, slows down and allows her tone to mushroom, wondrously large and enveloping.

I go back to their records often and I've discovered dozens of others from the Monday night shows at Quinn's. Jazz musicians can be more prolific than mid-'90s J Church, New Bomb Turks, and Man Or Astroman? combined. There's a steady stream of records and the more adventurous the musician, the greater the potential for extreme peaks and valleys. I suggest following specific musicians like some people follow certain directors or actors. Knowing the cast and/or creators is more

important than the genre. Over time you'll figure out who you trust.

I took the deep dive into free jazz about five years ago. I'm still puzzling it out, still discovering fascinating musicians from a wide range of ages, ethnicities, genders, cultures, and classes. I'm still running into performances and finding records that leave me bewildered. Not everything sticks, but there are few things in this life as invigorating as uncompromising music that respects your intelligence, doesn't lay out everything in a "paint-by-numbers" format, and leaves you with some work to do. As with punk, there's a lot to be explored and you can encounter a heap of "They don't make 'em like they used to," but open-minded thrill seekers will find plenty to embrace. Here's a list of records that helped me along my journey into this fascinating world.



*Mike Faloan is a longtime Razorcake contributor. His latest book, The Other Night at Quinn's, is out now on Razorcake/Gorsky. It's about the free jazz scene that emerged in a small town in upstate New York. Check it out if this article resonated.*

Thelonious Monk, *Brilliant Corners* (1957), *with John Coltrane* (1957)  
 Miles Davis, *Kinda Blue* (1959), *In a Silent Way* (1969)  
 John Coltrane, *Giant Steps* (1960), *Africa/Brass* (1961) *Love Supreme* (1965)  
 Pharoah Sanders, *Deaf Dumb Blind* (*Summun Bukmun Umyun*) (1970),  
 Pharoah Sanders & The Underground (2014)  
 Alice Coltrane, *Journey in Satchidananda* (1970)  
 Joe McPhee, *Nation Time* (1971), *Barrow Street Blues* (2015), *Plan B from Outer Space* (2017)  
 McCoy Tyner, *Extensions* (1970), *Enlightenment* (1973)  
 Anthony Braxton, *New York, Fall 1974* (1974), *Five Pieces 1975* (1975)  
 Mary Halvorson, *Saturn Sings* (2010), *Illusionary Sea* (2013), *Away with You* (2016)  
 Kirk Knuffke, *Arms & Hands* (2015)  
 Andrew Drury, *Content Provider* (2015)  
 Jaimie Branch, *Fly or Die* (2017)  
 Ingrid Laubrock, *Roulette of the Cradle* (2015)  
 Tomeka Reid Quartet, *Self-titled* (2015)  
 Kamasi Washington, *The Epic* (2015)



# TOP 5s

Abdul Vas

1. AC/DC, *Back in Black* LP
2. *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, by Hunter S. Thomson (book)
3. Big Joe Williams, *Tough Times* LP
4. Gretsch Jet Firebird 1963 (guitar)
5. *Bullet* (movie, 1996)

Aphid Peewit

- Dwarves, *Take Back the Night* CD
- GBH, *Momentum* CD
- *Read & Riot: A Pussy Riot Guide to Activism*, by Nadya Tolokonnikova (book)
- *Who Is America*, Sacha Baron Cohen DVD
- *Freak Kingdom: Hunter Thompson's Manic Ten-Year Crusade against American Fascism*, by Timothy Denevi

Art Ettinger

- Toys That Kill / Iron Chic, Split LP
- Various Artists, *The Lookouting!* 2 x LP
- Blood Pressure, *Surrounded* LP
- Groovie Ghoulies, *The 80's Collection* CS
- *The Ranger* (movie)

Billy Kostka

- Warthog, Self-titled
- Terrorist, *American Today*
- Sick Thoughts, Self-titled LP
- Alien Nosejob, *Death of the Vinyl Boom*
- OCS, live in S.F.

Bill Pinkel

- Carbonas, *Your Moral Superiors: Singles and Rarities* 2 x LP
- Alkaline Trio, *Is This Thing Cursed* LP
- Basement Benders, *Shrapnel Songs* LP
- Creeps, *Old Crimes: Singles Collection 2009-2013* LP
- Neighborhood Brats, *Claw Marks* LP, tied with seeing them live in L.A. with Maniac and Night Birds!

Candace Hansen

2018: WOW

- Every banger at The Smell this year. SLoW reunion at Jenna Pup's b-day. Riot Grrrl Carnival. Maya Songbird. All the feels. All the friends. All the dancing!
- Fatty Cakes & The Puff Pastries record release show in Fresno. It was one of the most powerful and beautiful shows I've ever experienced.
- Culture Abuse, *Bay Dream* on the way to yoga every day for as long as my summer Groupon lasted.
- *Steven Universe*, the queerest music-centric tear jerking emo drama since *The L Word*.
- Old Rancid songs with new memories and new friends and talking about *Life Won't Wait* every time I saw Daryl for a whole year.

Chad Williams

Top 5 of 2018

- Swingin' Utters, *Peace and Love*
- Night Birds, *Roll Credits*
- Battle Ruins, *Glorious Dead*
- Khemmis, *Desolation*
- No Problem, *Let God Sort 'Em Out*

Chris Mason

1. Tommy And The Commies, *Here Come*
2. Carbonas, *Your Moral Superiors: Singles and Rarities*
3. Bad Sports, *Constant Stimulation*
4. Negative Scanner, *Nose Picker*
5. S.B.F., *Same Beat Forever*

Chris Terry

- *Bedwetter*, *Flick Your Tongue...* CS
- Ultra Razzia LP
- Rosalia, *El Mal Querer* LP
- Earl Sweatshirt, *Some Rap Songs* LP
- *Incognegro: Renaissance*, by Mat Johnson (graphic novel)

Craven Rock

1. Working with Mutual Aid Disaster Relief after Hurricane Michael

2. Doing disaster relief with All Hands And Hearts after Hurricane Florence
3. The city of New Orleans
4. The Fest 17 (Swank, Radon, Tim Barry, Enablers, Doc Hopper, to name five)
5. *Danse Macabre* by Stephen King (book)

Daryl Gussin

- Spiritualized@, *And Nothing Hurt* LP
- Night Birds, Neighborhood Brats, Maniac, and Form Rank at Zebulon
- Nas, *Illmatic* LP from Jon Mule, thanks Jon!
- Toys That Kill / Iron Chic, Split LP
- The Linda Lindas, live at the Grand Star Jazz Club

Designated Dale

1. Manolito's All-Star Combo at the Club Rock en Español 30th Anniversary show at the Stardust Club in Downey, Calif. 12/8/2018
2. Non-Blips, Sapphic Musk, Neptunas, and La Tuya at Cafe NELA in Los Angeles, Calif. 11/17/2018
3. *L7: Pretend We're Dead* documentary. Way long overdue story for one of Hell A's most rocking outfits.
4. *Veep* series on HBO. If this show doesn't make you laugh, consult with your physician to make certain you're not dead.
5. My niece Maya in Chicago, taking up the drums and percussion at school during the fifth grade this past year. It begins.

Donna Ramone

Top 5 Albums of the Year

1. Sloppy Boys, *Lifelong Vacation*
2. The Dahmers, *Down in the Basement*
3. Sloppy Boys, *Lifelong Vacation* (I loved this album enough for it to deserve all five spots)
4. Bad Moves, *Tell No One*
5. Spook School, *Could It Be Different?*

Eric Baskauskas

- Warthog, 4th 7"
- U-Nix, *Nuke Portland 12"*
- Blood Pressure, *Surrounded 12"*

- Direct Hit, *Crown of Nothing* LP
- Bad Sports, *Constant Stimulation* LP

Jennifer Federico

Top 5 Favorite Buzzcocks Songs

- (RIP Pete Shelley)
- "Boredom"
- "Fast Cars"
- "I Don't Mind"
- "Strange Thing"
- "Ever Fallen in Love (With Someone You Shouldn't've)"

Jimmy Alvarado

- Club Rock en Español celebrates its 30th Anniversary—much love to some badass rockers who responsible for some truly badass history.
- La Tuya, Just Head, Bloody Brains at the Lexington in DTLA 12/1/18—this "family" show was off the goddamned chain.
- *The Chicano Generation: Testimonios from the Movement* book, by Mario T. Garcia—neat to read the oral histories of some of my father's old friends.
- *BlackkkKlansman* film, directed by Spike Lee—officially my second favorite film by him.
- The death of FilmStruck—corporate greed kills off the best film streaming service ever in order to create two lesser streaming services. Fuck you very much, AT&T.

Kayla Greet

- Pre-Fest 6 and Fest 17, Ybor and Gainesville, Fla.
- Lone Wolf, Self-titled
- Bad Moves, *Tell No One*
- Loser, Self-titled
- Being sober for a year

Kevin Dunn

1. The Brokedowns, *Sick of Space*
2. Dyke Drama, *Hard New Pills*
3. Swearin', *Fall into the Sun*
4. Heck Yes, *Get Jazzed*
5. Tropical Fuck Storm, *A Laughing Death in Meatspace*

Kurt Morris

Top 5 Songs Stuck in My Head Lately

1. "Spirit in Black" by Slayer
2. "Severance Pay" by Silkworm

*I loved this album enough for it to deserve all five spots.*



3. "Old Black Hen" by Songs: Ohia
4. "Slip It In" by Black Flag
5. "Chasing Death" by Slayer

#### Lauren Denitzio

##### Top 5 Favorite Records in 2018

- Culture Abuse, *Bay Dream*
- Warm Thoughts, *I Went Swimming Alone*
- Hop Along, *Bark Your Head Off, Dog*
- Jeff Rosenstock, *POST-*
- Nervus, *Everything Dies*

#### MariNaomi

##### Top 5 Reasons I'm behind on Shit

1. Found a disabled semi-feral kitten mewing at my doorstep on a rainy day
2. Need to feed the kitten
3. Need to take the kitten to the vet
4. Need to pet the kitten
5. Kitten

#### Mark Twistworthy

- Tropical Fuck Storm, *A Laughing Death in Meatspace LP*
- Exhalants / Pinko, *Split 12"*
- Marked Men, *On the Other Side LP*
- Cherubs, *Short of Popular 2 x LP* reissue
- Moving Targets, *The Other Side Demos & Sessions 2 x LP*

#### Martin Wong

1. Adolescents, D.O.A., Channel 3, and Croissants at the Observatory
2. Jawbreaker, Midget Handjob, and Savage Republic at the *Ben Is Dead* reunion show
3. Night Birds, Neighborhood Brats, Maniac, and Form Rank at Zebulon
4. The return of OFF! at the Observatory
5. Generation Sex (Billy Idol and Tony James from Generation X with Steve Jones and Paul Cook from the Sex Pistols) and Cherry Glazerr at the Roxy

#### Mike Fournier

- Desperate Bicycles
- Negative Scanner, *Nose Picker LP*
- Descendents, live at Palladium, Worcester, Mass. 10/27/18
- Character Actor 7"
- xXx fanzine anthology, by Mike Gitter

#### Mike Frame

1. Skitsystem / Disfear, entire catalogs
2. Stiff Love, entire catalog

3. Uada, *Cult of a Dying Sun*
4. Terry & Louie, *A Thousand Guitars*
5. Chris Hedges, *America: The Farewell Tour* (book)

#### DJ Naked Rob

##### Radio Valencia 87.9FM | SFCA

- Young Skulls, *Bomb Train Blues 7"* | N.Y. R'N'R
- Bad Mojos, *I Hope You OD LP* | Swiss punk rock
- A Pony Named Olga, *Ave Maria LP* | German cowpunk
- Th' Losin Streaks, *This Band Will Self-Destruct in T-Minus LP* | Sacto garage rock
- Neighborhood Brats, *Claw Marks LP* | Oakland/L.A. punk rock

#### Ollie Mikse

- Superchunk, *What a Time to be Alive*
- Swingin' Utters, *Peace and Love*
- Neko Case, *Hell-On*
- Jeff Rosenstock, *POST-*
- Kurt Vile, *Bottle It In*

#### Paul Silver

1. Vacation, Clown Sounds, The Treasure Fleet, John Cougar Concentration Camp, at Tower Bar, San Diego
2. Johnny Mafia, *Princes de l'Amour LP*
3. The Smoking Popes, *Into the Agony LP*
4. Drug Church, *Cheer LP*
5. Madison Bloodbath, Dan Padilla, The Maxies, Moderate To Severe at Empire Bowl, Redlands, Calif.

#### Rebecca Minjarez

1. My incredibly supportive and loving family.
2. Libraries and librarians.
3. Independent book and record stores.
4. Pancakes.
5. Ramen and albondigas.

#### Rene Navarro

1. Raising another bird that ended up getting killed. Life is precious. The pleasure is always worth the pain.
2. Pretty Flowers, *Why Trains Crash LP*
3. Thirsty Thursdays Presented By The Dollar Boys (it's a podcast)
4. Lobita R.I.P.
5. *Roma*, directed by Alfonso Cuarón

#### Rev. Norb

- BEST BUZZCOCKS SONG: "Breakdown"
- BEST BUZZCOCKS ALBUM: *A Different Kind of Tension*
- BEST BUZZCOCKS SINGLE: "Everybody's Happy Nowadays" b/w "Why Can't I Touch It?"
- BEST BUZZCOCKS COVER ART: "Promises" b/w "Lipstick" 45
- BEST BUZZCOCKS LIVE PERFORMANCE: The Rave, Milwaukee, 1989

#### Rich Cocksedge

##### In Memory of Pete Shelley R.I.P. Thanks for all the tunes.

- Moving Targets, The Stupids, Diaz Brothers, Travis Cut, live at Sebright Arms, London
- Śmierć, *Godzina Pusta LP* / Warshy, *The Noble Cause Digital EP*
- Social Experiment, *Rumours of Our Demise Are Not Greatly Exaggerated LP*
- Balloon Flights, *Psychologically Broken LP*
- Nan Rando, *F Digital EP* / CRIM, *Pare Nostre Que Esteu a L'Infern LP*

#### Rick V.

##### Top Five Fictional Bands

1. Circus Monkey (watch *Bandwagon*)
2. The Groovie Goolies (don't watch, just listen)
3. The Impossibles (pretty bad, but the cartoon is great)
4. Zit Remedy (one song over their six-year career)
5. Josie And The Pussycats (movie version)

#### Rosie Gonce

##### Top 5 Songs My Sister (Guitar) and I (Drums) Used to Play Together

1. "Amoeba," Adolescents, Self-titled LP
2. "Hope," Descendents, *Milo Goes to College LP*
3. "Sometimes I," Plasmatics, *New Hope for the Wretched LP*
4. "Shitlist," L7, *Bricks Are Heavy LP*
5. "Get It On," Turbonegro, *Apocalypse Dudes LP*

#### Ryan Nichols

1. Robert White Nichols (R.I.P.)
2. Barcelona, Spain
3. Porto, Portugal
4. Horny Wave
5. Skateboarding

#### Sal Lucci

1. *Destroy All Art, Vol. 2 LP*
2. Carbonas, *Your Moral Superiors: Singles and Rarities 2 x LP*
3. Priors, *New Pleasure LP*
4. Des Demonas, *Bay of Pigs EP*
5. John Wesley Coleman III, *Cuckoo Bird Sings a Song LP*

#### Sean Arenas

- Idaho Green, *Rancher Bones 7"*
- Great American House Fire, *Promise Me Endings 12"* EP
- Color TV, Self-titled LP
- Neurotic Fiction, *Pulp Music LP*
- Vanilla Poppers, *I Like Your Band 7"* EP

#### Sean Koepenick

##### Top Shelf

1. Joan Jett, *Bad Reputation* (documentary)
2. Pylon Reenactment Society, Self-titled 7"
3. Superchunk, *Our Work Is Done 7"*
4. CH3, *After the Lights Go Out LP* reissue
5. Dot Dash, *Proto Retro* download

#### Toby Tober

##### Top 5 Movies I Have Recently Enjoyed

1. *Support the Girls*
2. *RBG*
3. *Descent into the Maelstrom: The Radio Birdman Story*
4. *Heavy Trip*
5. *Norm MacDonald Has a Show*

#### Todd Taylor

- Superchunk, *What a Time to be Alive LP*
- The Linda Lindas and Phranc, live at the Grand Star Jazz Club
- Bad Sports, *Constant Stimulation LP*
- Marked Men, *On the Other Side LP*
- Color TV, Self-titled LP
- BB And The Blips, Self-titled demo CS

#### Ty Stranglehold

1. Neighborhood Brats, *Claw Marks LP*
2. Color TV, Self-titled LP
3. Fucked Up, *Dose Your Dreams 2 x LP*
4. Bad Sports, *Constant Stimulation LP*
5. Clown Sounds, *Preacher Maker LP*





#### A.M. NICE: *End of an Era*: CD

Modern post-punk that recalls both Mission Of Burma and maybe a less atonal Middle Class. The tunes are both dissonant and infused with smart pop sensibilities; creative yet not too self-obsessed to end up diving into an emo pigeonhole. —Jimmy Alvarado (Phratry)

#### ALLVARET: *Skam Och Skuld*: LP

Dour Swedish punk is the order of the day here. I'm a little reticent to saddle it with the adjective "poppy" 'cause, catchy though it may be, the vibe is so fucking bleak at times that word seems too happy. None of this is meant as a dismissal. Quite the contrary, in fact—this is a solid album with some great goddamned songs, but the dark cloud is almost palpable. Recommended. —Jimmy Alvarado (Dirt Cult)

#### ANOTHER ONE / DISTRACTIONS, THE: Split: 7"

Michigan's Another One and Indiana's The Distractions team up with a collection of songs each on this split 7". Another One has a punk'n'roll vibe on their opening track "The Clinic" with some driving riffs and a sweet guitar lead. All three of their tracks were great turned up to eleven, but their opener was what really stuck with me. The Distractions, though boasting a larger discography as far as I could tell, were aptly named. They were only a distraction from the real gems on the other side of the record. —Paul J. Comeau (Smoking Cat)

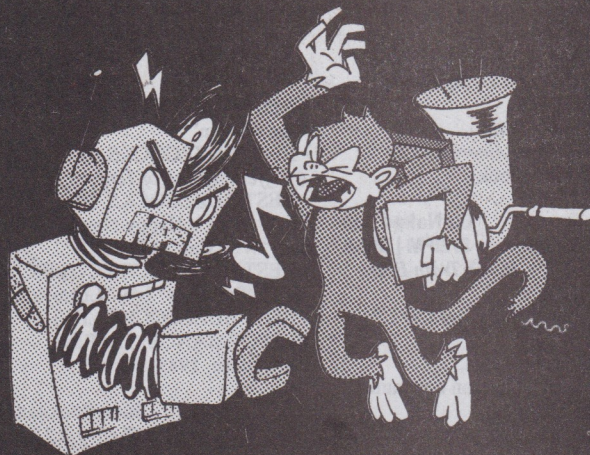
#### AR-KAICS, THE: *In This Time*: CD

This band might be time travelers. They are completely nailing that '60s, whispery, garage rock revival. Yes, it's another garage band. But to their credit (and my limited time listening to '60s garage rock), they truly sound like they are of that era. Even in the recording quality nothing is overly slick or reeking of studio magic; just slightly spooky, breathy rock with bright guitars. The second track, "Some People," reminds me a lot of "Strength to Endure" by the Ramones. They use the same hook, which makes sense since The Fast Four were snatching the coattails off of this era of music and swapping it for leather jackets. Maybe that's the closest I ever really get to psych rock and the decade of free love. Just Ramones. And I'm fine with that. There's nothing wrong with this record, but I can't see myself putting it on, even in the background. But I also hate The Doors. This is probably for that King Khan & BBQ Show and Ty Segall crowd with cool haircuts. —Kayla Greet (Daptone)

#### ATTENTAT SONORE: *Turbulences*: LP/CD

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of Attentat Sonore setting out on the road of punk/hardcore in central France. That trek has seen a plethora of singles and albums being released, but *Turbulences* is the first new music to come out in five years and the first album in eight. Earlier material had a rough hew to it. This

## RECORD REVIEWS



Sometimes all it takes to start a new society of subterranean city dwellers is the right soundtrack.

—Daryl Gussin

Cobra Man, Toxic Planet LP

time out, the band has got a slightly cleaner, American-influenced sound, crossing the boundaries of punk, hardcore, and a bit of garage rock. The lyrics are a mixture of French and English, and although I have a very basic knowledge of the former, it's the latter which confirm the political and social leanings of the quartet. This is a really strong record and reminds me a bit of La Tuya in places. It's good to have Attentat Sonore back in the saddle again. —Rich Cocksedge (Guerilla Vinyl / Zone Onze / Keponteam)

#### AUTOGRAMM:

##### *What R U Waiting 4?*: LP

Vancouver's Autogramm are a serious force to be reckoned with. Three major veterans of the scene (who've done time in The Black Haloes, The Spitfires, Destroyer, Blood Meridian, Black Mountain, and Lightweight Dust, just to scratch the surface) that somehow pull off a massive loud and diverse rock sound, merely as a power trio. While the band does wrestle with the power pop subgenre, it isn't as nestled in the Paul Collins/Nick Lowe pocket as most have been in the last decade. Rather, they touch on the new wave records that came a few years later, hinting closer to Ric Ocasek and Elvis Costello vibes. Not an easy task, but damn, do they fit in there nicely. It's solid since those elements combined with a straight-forward rock'n'roll format make their tunes palatable to pretty much anyone. This is a seriously impressive release, from the early smasher of "Jessica Don't Like Rock'n'roll" all the way to "I Wanna Be Whipped" at the end of the flip. The band seems intent on touring as much as possible, so make sure to check them out when they pull through

town next. Easily a year-ender for me. —Steve Adamyk (Nevado)

#### AUTORAMAS: *Libido*: CD

This long-tenured Brazilian quartet sounds nowhere near as kitschy nor as Epoxies-esque as the neo-Ed Fotheringham cover art would lead one to believe — there are no songs about sex droids nor surfing on Neptune (as far as I can tell, but the only Portuguese I know I learned from *Superzan y el Niño del Espacio*, and most of that was telepathic). Instead, they weld a sort of dark Estrus Records surf-rock vibe to a throbbing ooziness that suggests hairspray and shaken booties and might not have sounded out of place sandwiched between Ned's Atomic Dustbin and the Soup Dragons on *120 Minutes*, although I might be remembering that entire era incorrectly. Phrased somewhat less frivolously, this sounds like a cross between '90s surf/garage and not-too-light, not-too-dark '90s alternative rock, but assembled in such a fashion so that if you were more about the surf/garage and not so much about the alternative, you might very well still dig it. I suspect the Brazilian aspect of things gives this a certain *otherness* that prevents quick and easy categorization, even though the component parts seem pretty obvious. Half the time I think this disc just wants to crawl around on my floor, biting its thumb and dripping weird fluids on the carpet, but when they really put the hammer down, it's like they're frying my face in a skillet full of butter and hard drugs. *Oh, heck, you had me at "Brazilian!"* BEST SONG: "Ding Dong." BEST SONG TITLE: "Creepy Echo." FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: If you've ever wanted to hear what Blondie's "I

Know but I Don't Know" sounds like in Portuguese, today's your lucky day, Melvin! —Rev. Nørb (Soundflat)

#### BANANAS, THE / RIVERS EDGE: *The Bananas + Rivers Edge*: CS

It's been quite some time since the Bananas have graced us with any new tunes (*New Animals* came out a decade ago!) so I had to pinch myself when I found this tape in my review cubby. Only the Bananas can take ten years off from recording and still come through with two new songs of their patented brand of manic punk that makes you want to bounce off the walls and yell in people's faces with excitement. The joke's on me for initially having my doubts, but even the Bananas see the humor in all of this as their liner notes slate the year 2025 for the release of a new album. Hardy-fuckin'-har. Rivers Edge are punk rock lifers from Chattanooga with members from a plethora of great bands including Basement Benders, Sexy, ADD/C, and Future Virgins. Two songs of heartfelt punk from the South. Tough sounding, but not in a knuckle-headed way. Anyone who's seen any of their previous bands play live know that they pour every ounce of blood, sweat, and tears into their performance and these studio songs exert that passion onto tape. Two wonderful surprises on one cassette. You can't go wrong with this one. —Juan Espinosa (Lifers Tapes)

#### BASEMENT BENDERS: *Shrapnel Songs*: LP

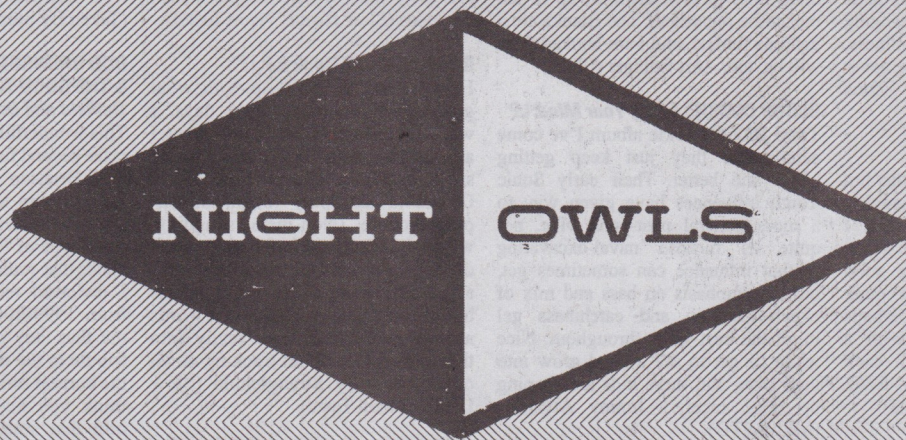
I haven't ever spent time listening to this band and I think I'm going to change that now. There's quite a bit of Bent Out Of Shape, Needles/Pins, and Tiltwheel—that scrappy, messy, melodic punk. Songs that you can sound like the most pissed-off person in the world, yet still harmonize. It's a kind of pretty screaming that early emo got right and modern punk is constantly imperfecting. Never goes too hard or too soft, just dips its toes in both sides of the pool to find a homogeneity while also making waves. Definitely digging this a lot and looking forward to more. —Kayla Greet (Dead Broke)

#### BEDWETTER:

##### *Flick Your Tongue against Your Teeth and Describe the Present*: CS

Travis Miller is an underground rapper/producer from Virginia, best known for his early '10s horrorcore albums as Lil Ugly Mane. This is the first album from his new Bedwetter project, which blends airtight rapping with experimental musical textures. "Man Wearing a Helmet" starts with pouring rain and soundbites playing over the top; too echoey to understand. After a minute, ominous washes of synth take over and Miller raps a tale of a kid dreaming of pajamas, blankets, and other comforts of home while being kidnapped. After two straight minutes of rapping, drums and the hook come in. Throughout this album, the shouted raps are in contrast to the calm music, and listening to it feels like losing your mind in a serene setting. Just





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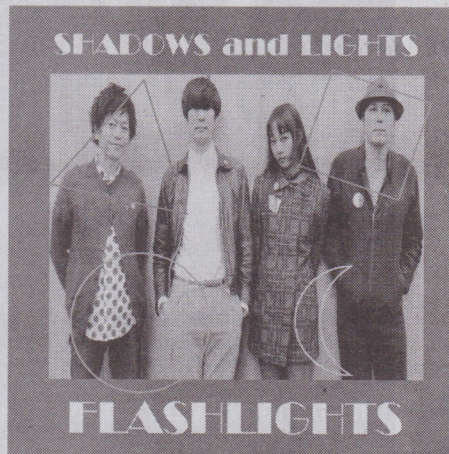
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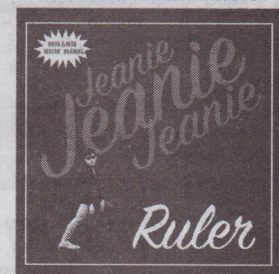
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because something looks okay on the outside doesn't mean that it is. This is a harrowing and thoroughly engaging look at depression and mental illness, with fucking good rapping. I've never heard anything quite like it. —Chris Terry (Vinyl Conflict)

#### BITE MARKS: *Sucia: 12"*

When I laid my eyes upon the hot pink vinyl silk screened with naughty girl themed emojis on one side, I knew something right might be going on. Bite Marks is everything good happening in the Gainesville punk scene: femme post-hardcore, perhaps comparable to EW, WHIP, with a grittier/dirtier Pylon tilt. With each listen I became more smitten. Sold. —Carmyle Reynolds (Belladonna)

#### BLACK MAMBAS: *Moderation: LP*

Local band—Bell Gardens, Calif.—just tearing shit up with an infectious mix of Briefs-meet-Boys punk rockin' with heavy doses of pub rock tossed into the batter. They do the sound justice, managing to sound both authentic and not dated, thanks to some spot-on tunesmithing and delivery. —Jimmy Alvarado (Disconnected)

#### BLANKZ, THE: *I'm a Gun: 7"*

This is the third Blankz single in a series of nine, another killer slab of vinyl from Phoenix's finest Briefs-influenced group. Both songs here are great, with the title track having a corresponding music video to match. Hopefully these singles will be compiled into a full-

length in the end, but I'm going to make sure to pick them all up in the meantime regardless. The Blankz are a genuine funfest, and I am hooked. You will be, too. —Art Ettinger (Slope)

#### BLOOD COOKIE: *Empty Your Mind: LP*

Third Blood Cookie album I've come across and they just keep getting better and better. Their early Sonic Youth influences have given way to a more general post-punk vibe, not quite as morose navel-excavating as that influence can sometimes get, but the emphasis on bass and mix of experimentation and catchiness gel in all the best ways throughout. Nice when ye get to see a band grow into their own, and these kids are shaping up quite nicely. —Jimmy Alvarado (MPLS LTD)

#### BLOOD PRESSURE: *Surrounded: LP*

Another stunner of a release from this Pittsburgh gaggle of malcontents. Heavy duty hardcore is the order of the day: brief (average tune here clocks in at around a minute), punchy, and falling somewhere between Out Cold and Negative Approach in malicious intent. Fist in air, circle pit opened in living room, my two pet bunnies looking at me confusedly. —Jimmy Alvarado (Beach Impediment)

#### BOOTLICKER: *6 Track EP: 7"*

Blown-out hardcore and d-beat wall of noise in an 86 Mentality goes Disclose sort of way. Unfortunately, the songs aren't very impactful and seem a

bit half-baked so the results are far less sexy than you'd imagine. —Juan Espinosa (Slow Death / Neon Taste)

#### BOOTLICKER: *6 Track E.P.: 7"*

I am so out of the loop with what goes on in hardcore these days. I won't even pretend to know what I am talking about when it comes to subgenres. Bootlicker are from British Columbia and play tough, blown-out hardcore. (Non-metal sounding, which is a huge plus for me.) Most of the tracks are mid-tempo and have a U.K. flavor to them. Gruff vocals but you can still make out that words are being uttered. I am really into this and will go about tracking down other EPs. —Ty Stranglehold (Slow Death / Neon Taste)

#### BRIEFS, THE: *Kids Laugh at You: 7"*

Hell yeah, new Briefs, albeit rather brief. I'm not complaining though. As someone who's been a fan since at least 2002, I have yet to be disappointed with anything they put out. The A Side, "Kids Laugh at You" sounds like it fits right in with the rest of their catalog: big guitar riffs, slick solos, sing-songy choruses, melodic hooks. All the parts are there. Then the flipside kicks in with a killer lead and a different singer. I can't tell for sure, but it doesn't sound like Steve E. Nix. My guess is Kicks? Either way, with this change there's definitely a slight shift in tone, but not in quality. They almost remind me of ToyGuitar here. I really enjoy both tracks, but I'm leaning more towards

the titular one. Here's looking forward to a new full length. —Kayla Greet (Taken By Surprise)

#### BUD BRONSON & THE GOOD TIMERS: *Between the Outfield and Outer Space: LP*

This wonderfully powerful emo album is the second full-length from Denver's Bud Bronson & The Good Timers. There's pure angst behind the potent melodic tunes, many of which are about some type of loss. There were a lot of bands that sounded like this back when I reviewed records for *Punk Planet* from 1999-2007, which suggests to me that they're intentionally paying tribute to the emo of the first years of the current millennium. You probably think you know by now if you're into that sound, but there's a keen freshness to this record that is highly contagious. I love it! —Art Ettinger (Snappy Little Numbers)

#### BUMMER: *Holy Terror: LP*

Noise rock/hardcore all nice and atonal 'n' virulent. They hammer away at quirky rhythms and scream accordingly, with just the right amount of "metal" in the guitars to give 'em heft without getting wanky about it. —Jimmy Alvarado (Learning Curve)

#### CAR CITY: *Self-titled: LP*

A Northeastern Wisconsin supergroup of sorts, Car City includes Tenement's Amos Pitsch, acoustic punk stalwart Walt Hamburger, and Timm Buechler, probably best known for being in

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Rebel Waltz before he started touring with ex-Nerves. The engine (if I must) of Car City, however, is the potentially less-widespread Jason Lemke, who was in 88 MPH, should you remember them. Car City is his baby; these songs were carried about in his head for years, smuggled through the minefield of life like an heirloom wristwatch up the butt of a crafty and sentimental prisoner of war. His songs are thick, steadfastly midtempo, poppy rock numbers—melodic, but rarely overtly catchy. One supposes this lends them a modicum of soul-felt authenticity. The first side comes and goes pleasantly enough, with four sturdy-but-samey tunes split by a mushier ditty in 6/8 time. Side A starts much like side B: With me shrugging and reminding myself that I had to listen to the Replacements' *Tim* album about four dozen times before it finally took root. With "Foolish Pride," my ears perk up. With "Challenger," the record has my full attention. With "Soul Jam," I'm ready to stand up and cheer. And *then...* it's over. There are only nine songs, and the three best ones are at the end. So, either Car City are a slow acting poison that takes six songs to metabolize, or these guys are a bunch of dipshits from Wisconsin who have sequenced their record absolutely, completely backwards. I guess it is a backwards place, ain't it? BEST SONG: "Soul Jam" or "Challenger." BEST SONG TITLE: None known. FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: I've had an 88 MPH button on the lapel of my white leather jacket for

about the last fifteen years. —Rev. Nørð (Plant Music, pmrc.xyz)

**CARBONAS: *Your Moral Superiors: Singles and Rarities*: 2 x LP**

The Carbonas self-titled record really deserves at least a notion of neo-classic status. It was their third and last long-player. I listened to it over and over again and never got tired of it. It's a no brainer for the punk'n'roll crowd. It also seems to have been the band's swan song. The only release to come after is a 2008 Euro-Tour-only single which is included here on *Your Moral Superiors*, a two-LP set reaching back to compile all of the band's singles in one place along with some scorching outtakes cut from albums or recorded for projects that never came to fruition. There's a map inside the gatefold explaining where all the tracks fall in the band's timeline and gives you a little insight into this purveyor of Atlanta punk. Speed, snot, attitude, and overdriven rock'n'roll riffs are prevalent. The album kicks out with the title track from their *Blackout 7"*. The song is a pedal-to-the-metal punk'n'roll mover utilizing the classic Chuck Berry riff. The album continues at high speeds, slowing occasionally to the speed of a cover of "Stoned to Death" by Zero Boys. The songs stay solid, laying down destroying rock between those two speeds and taking out a few garbage cans. I'm a fan, so I failed to find a clunker. It's as cool as being able to pull off sunglasses at night. —Billups Allen (Goner)

**CARBONAS: *Your Moral Superiors: Singles and Rarities*: 2 x LP**

A double album collection of songs from the ATL's beloved garage punks Carbonas, who haven't been an active band (but also haven't officially broken up) since their masterful self-titled album released well over a decade ago. The songs on these records come from previously released but out-of-print 7"s, split 7"s, compilation track, and rare or unreleased gems. They serve as either an excellent retrospective or introduction to a band that has since become of legendary stature. To those of us lucky enough to have caught them live, it's fun to look back at all the songs that made up their set lists. For those who are new to the group, well then I sincerely hope they decide to play again so you too may one day regale your friends with tales of Carbonas' legendary performances. I can't help but mention the cover songs on these records that are a clear indicator of the band's influences: songs by Kaos, The Plugz, Zero Boys, G.G. Allin, et cetera further prove that these Georgia boys not only have good taste but also the musical chops to not fuck these songs up. Besides the Big Boys' *Wreck Collection*, I can't think of a better double LP collection well worth your money, so don't pass this one up. —Juan Espinosa (Goner)

**CHEAP APPEAL: *Self-titled*: 7"**

Vancouver is really blowing up with quality punk and hardcore bands these days. Cheap Appeal are another

great example. Fast blasts of hardcore insanity are the order of the day. The drumming is, as my Dad often says, "tighter than a bull's ass in fly season" and that really is the key to these songs. Don't get me wrong, I like all aspects of this record, but those drums are relentless and so damn good! I can't remember a time there was this many quality bands in Vancouver all playing at once. Cheap Appeal are definitely on my list of bands to check out live over there. —Ty Stranglehold (Neon Taste)

**CHEAP CLONE: *Self-titled*: 7" EP**

I got this EP with a list of other releases from this label out of Cleveland and I think it's pretty cool that they could send me a list of four releases put out by bands all from the city. That level of support is cool and it made me happy to listen to this EP, which is a sweeter rendition of Defiance, Ohio's more toothy Midwest folk punk. The folk is more influence than foundation here, sort of like a less polished Good Luck, which carries right down to the split male/female vocals and the faint scent of a nearby Great Lake. —Theresa W. (Just Because)

**CHÜKO: *"Low-life" b/w "Aquarium"*: 7"**

The two songs on this 7" sounded so dramatically different, that I was not sure what to make of Chüko. "Low-life," is a track of fuzzy garage punk. Totally up my alley, and I liked it more with every listen. Its driving riff really gets caught in your head after a few listens. The B Side track



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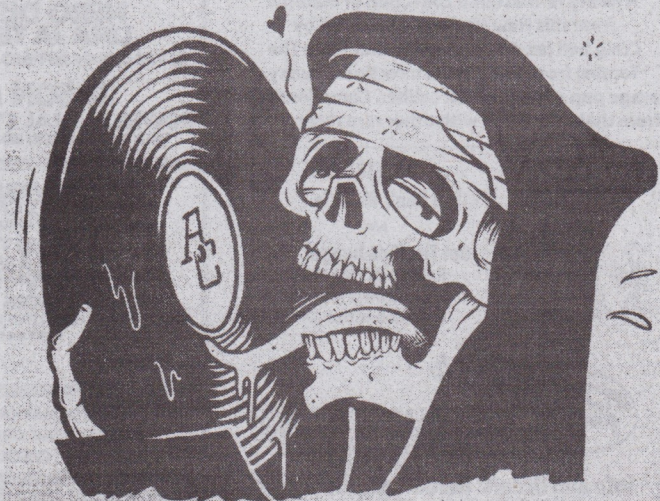
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"Aquarium," by contrast, is a piece of keyboard-driven, ethereal, and ambient navel-gazing. After several dozen listens of "Aquarium," I began to feel like a character trapped in a David Lynch film, with this song as the soundtrack. I'm probably still trapped here listening to the song as you read this. Please don't tap on the glass. —Paul J. Comeau (Pineapple Lung Cleanse)

#### CITY MOUSE / MURDERBURGERS: Split: 7"

City Mouse: Pop punk stalwarts still going strong after all these years. Call it success or consistency, but they still sound like the same band touring off their debut 7". The hooks are solid and the tunes are slick. If they haven't wormed their way into your ear yet, I don't think this will change your mind, but it's a solid set of songs. Murderburgers: I actually met my soon-to-be-fiancé at a Dear Landlord/Murderburgers show. We didn't start dating until over a year later, but I always think of her when I hear either band. The Murderburgers have done nothing but get better with age. Every release shows them growing as musicians and songwriters. They contributed one original and one Teenage Bottlerocket cover to this release; both are some primo shit. "All I Think about Is Sleep" is maybe the best song I've heard from them, but that's a matter of debate. —Gwen Static (Brassneck / It's Alive)

#### CLOWN SOUNDS: Preacher Maker: LP

Clown Sounds appears to be formerly a solo project of Todd C. that is now an actual band. If you're at all familiar with Todd's past then you may know what to expect, especially since Clown Sounds is primarily made up of members and artists he's previously worked with (guys from Toys That Kill, Underground Railroad To Candyland, Stoned At Heart, et cetera). Eight songs that sound like they could fit right into any other of Todd C. band's records and that's why this record doesn't quite grab me. They're not bad songs per se, but the record does come across as a compilation of tracks that didn't make the cut for any other band's releases. I've followed Todd's career since the early '90s with F.Y.P up until this record, but unlike *Dance My Duncie*, *Bird Roughs*, or *Control the Sun* I don't feel like I'll be revisiting this record too often. —Juan Espinosa (Recess)

#### COBRA MAN: Toxic Planet: LP

Donna Summers/Giorgio Moroder in conjunction with Spike Jonze and the reverse-vampires is our strongest theory as to how this record came about. Bedroom disco project that is the soundtrack for a goddamn hilarious skate video. It's got that warm, egalitarian production that makes me want to carve "lo-fi" into my forehead and just disappear into the sewers beneath Los Angeles. Sometimes all it takes to start a new society of subterranean city dwellers is the right soundtrack. And Toxic Planet might

just be what we need to risk it all. —Daryl (Goner)

#### COFFIN SALESMAN:

##### Nicrophorus Americanus: CD

*Nicrophorus Americanus* is Coffin Salesman's third album in the last two years. The full-band project of vocalist/guitarist Aria Rad, Coffin Salesman is guitar- and piano-driven blues rock. The full band includes fiddle/violin, bass, piano, and drums. Rad handles vocals, guitar, and some piano duties, and wrote all the songs and lyrics. The opening track "The Watchmaker," was slow to get going, and didn't catch my ear, but the rest of the album packs enough emotional and musical intensity to make up for the bland introduction. With both raucous rockers, and slow and somber tracks as in "Scene of the Crime," Coffin Salesman hits all the right emotional and musical notes. —Paul J. Comeau (Coffin Salesman)

#### COLOR TV: Self-titled: LP

An explosive combination of Hickey and Steve Adamyk Band, Color TV's ten-song LP from the get-go goes off like a firecracker. With spasmodic drums and fuzzy dual guitars, this Minnesotan/Oregonian four-piece have dialed into a head-spinning, adrenaline-fueled sound that's lean and mean. Fortunately, the songs never overstay their welcome because the average length is an urgent ninety seconds. A Side closer "Pale and Vicious," however, proves they can write a three-minute power pop hit.

They fill the extra time with hooky, Marked Men-ish vocals and a guitar lead that's guaranteed to bore into your head. Album closer "Too Close" proves yet again that they can deliver a chorus so punchy it bruises your eardrums and induces uncontrollable head bobbing. Color TV's self-titled full-length might be over in a flash, but it demands repeat listens. —Sean Arenas (Deranged)

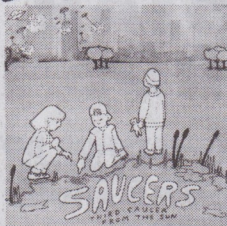
#### COLOR TV: Self-titled: LP

Gordon from Deranged really did me a solid when he suggested this Minnesota band's debut 7" to me a couple of years ago. I was instantly hooked by their pop weirdness along with their seemingly impossible ability to be so tight yet swirling in chaos and feeling like the songs are on the verge of falling apart. There was one 7" after that on Neck Chop but in the back of my brain I have been clamoring for a full length, and here it is. The LP is a perfect continuation of what Color TV has already established. Musically, I have them living in the same neighborhood as Marked Men and Maniac and that's a pretty good place to reside. This album makes my eyelids sweat like only my favorite hot sauces can. Endless spins in Castle Stranglehold. —Ty Stranglehold (Deranged)

#### COLTRANES: White Hag: LP

The feeling of an exquisite bargain bin find distilled into a single record. The album sits somewhere between metal-infused crust and adjectiveless, capital "P" Punk. I wouldn't be shocked if I

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REF-84 LITTER PARTY "MEMORY LOSS"... SEATTLE/AKRON DUO MAKES QUIRKY D.I.X. POWER-POP, MEMBER OF DOGBRETH.

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was told this was a remastered lost '80s classic. The riffs are powerful and pointed, the vocals cut through like a well-tuned machine. If you like records that just plain "rock the fuck out," you'll find some excellent tracks here. I'm keeping this one in the collection. —Gwen Static (SPHC)

**COMMONWEALTH, THE:**  
***Worst Things First*: LP**

Places with bloody histories of oppression and injustice often breed the strongest backlash, which is why some of the most underrated punk rock comes from the South. (Cases in point, ANTISEEN and Dirty South Revolutionaries.) The Commonwealth has been a staple of the Charlotte, N.C. punk scene for years, but they only recently recorded their first EP, *Worst Things First*. Guitarist Simon Strivelli brings Irish influences to his vocal harmonies and to drummer Richie Greckie's rolling, energetic, SoCal-style beats, the sum of which sounds like the Dropkick Murphys on skateboards. Daniel O'Leary's bass lines dart swiftly in between galloping drums, adding grit and texture. Instrumental breaks between verses display the band's raw musical chops, which come straight from the late '90s punk era. And those angry shouts declaring working-class strife aren't just talk—the guys live and breathe blue collar jobs and tenuous-at-best living arrangements. *Worst Things First* is the whole punk package, and it leaves you not wanting the party to end. —Michelle Kirk (The War Zone)

**CONSTANTLY TERRIFIED:**  
**Self-titled: CS**

This recording is super lo-fi, but I almost wonder what will happen to me once this band records something with more slick production. I honestly think it might turn me into dust. The drumming on this record is mind-melting and when I casually put this on in a room with a few people, I watched them all stop what they were doing and freeze like deer in the headlights, trying to listen to what was happening. Every song hovers around a minute and the only thing that gives away that this isn't a Charles Bronson record played at lower speed is how fucking tight it all is. Even as the vocals shred, you can tell that by "constantly terrified" these folks don't mean that they live in a state of horror but, rather, just the regular persistent anxiety of living in the world. We can all relate. —Theresa W. (Self-released)

**CORONARY: Demo 2018: CS**

The rebirth of demos recorded live at shows is refreshing. There's no wondering how a band sounds live if what you're hearing is off of a soundboard at a gig. Recorded at the legendary Liar's Club in Chicago in September of 2018, this six-song demo blazes through in less than eight minutes! Reminiscent of Repos-era Chicago hardcore, there's nothing not to like here. —Art Ettinger (Self-released, coronary.bandcamp.com)

**CRAZY SQUEEZE, THE:**  
***Savior of the Streets*: LP**

I love this band. I was really happy to hear this record, since I haven't listened to this band in a while. Johnny Witmer from the Stitches does what he does best here: play punk rock. You get a bit of everything from this band—power pop, glam, rock'n'roll, punk, attitude, beer, and, most importantly, fun. Go see this band live! —Ryan Nichols (Disconnected)

**CRIM: Pare Nostre Que**  
***Esteu a L'Infern*: LP/CD**

I am at a loss to understand why this band is not talked about more, especially when it has now produced three top notch albums, full of big, melodic punk anthems. I know we cannot all appreciate the same things but Crim really does excel at what it does. *Pare Nostre Que Esteu a L'Infern*, or roughly translated "Our Father Who Art in Hell," carries on in exactly the same vein as its predecessor *Blau Sang, Vermell Cel* with a wall of sound and many instances where it makes me want to punch the air with glee. There is a clear emphasis also on the lead guitar throughout, much more than has been in evidence before, adding plenty to the songs, and which at times is reminiscent of Stiff Little Fingers' Jake Burns. Sung in Catalan, the vocals are gruff and sit well within the whole package, giving an air of streetpunk to the music. Geddon and join the Crim crew, you won't regret it. —Rich Cocksedge (Bcore / Contra / Pirates Press)

**CRISIS ACTORS: Demo 2018: CS**

Completely wild and bonkers punk out of Boston. The vocals are over the top and I love it; imagine Alice Bag in a shouting match with Joy De Vivre! Musically, they've hit that sweet spot smack dab in the middle of classic L.A. punk like Angry Samoans and the substance-fueled rage of the Orphans; someone's gonna get a black eye in the pit. I can guarantee that you're not going to hear a better demo released in 2018. Absolutely essential. —Juan Espinosa (Self-released, crisisactorsboston@gmail.com)

**CROSS BROTHERS:**  
***Living on Sheepheads*: 12"**

It's time for me to go officially on record: I like the Strokes, and it's not my fault that a nation full of lunkheads once thought they were the bees' knees. The Cross Brothers (Cleveland's Cross Brothers; not the Cross Brothers from Byrdstown, Tenn.) remind me of a better version of the Strokes: tight, restrained, poppy rock'n'roll, but with an amazing tribal and vaguely rockabilly backbeat to many of the songs. Good record. —The Lord Kveldulfr (Just Because)

**DAGGER: Hexes: CS**

Northwest Indiana's Dagger rip through seven songs of stripped-down, torrential hardcore punk. Think of the dirty boot of *Pick Your King-era* Poison Idea being licked clean by the subservient tongue of Dutch legends BGK. If you're in need of an ass kicking then jam this cassette in your




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tape deck and drop your pants, but remember: twice for flinching. —Juan Espinosa (Not Normal Tapes)

#### DEATH LOTTERY: *EPII: EP*

Fast and scrappy band with blown-out vocals and blistering guitars. Sometimes it seems like the dual guitarists are in two different bands, mostly because of the effects they throw on their six strings. The recording is really bare bones with a lot of reverb and distortion. Every now and then I get the feeling they're trying to cover up some mistakes, but the majority of it is so sloppy that I truly doubt that's the case. These guys are just a supercharged party band with lots of fuzz. Then there's the fourth track that squeezes some surf leads into the song. I could see it fitting somewhere within the Sub Pop realm. Nice bonus to have included not just a personalized hand screened sticker, but also Wade Boggs's all star card. Party on, dudes. —Kayla Greet (FBI)

#### DEATHGRAVE: *So Real, It's Now: CD*

Potent death/grind/powerviolence stuff that knows when to lay off the pummeling and let you headbang. There's a good sense of humor that stops short of irony. For example, "Casket Bath" is literally about breaking into a graveyard and using a coffin as a tub. I have zero reference points for this type of metal, but will say that if you like bong hits and campy horror movies, this is worth a spin. —Chris Terry (Tankcrimes)

#### DESAHUCIADOS: *Self-titled: LP*

Who knew there was a bridge to gap between the agonizing bliss of Christian Death's *Only Theatre of Pain* and Rudimentary Peni's *Death Church*? Puerto Rico's Desahuciados, that's who. Eleven delectably grotesque incantations outlining the misery and pain that is human life. Desahuciados translates to "hopeless": aesthetically and thematically it fits. See you at your funeral. —Juan Espinosa (Slovenly)

#### DIRECT HIT: *Crown of Nothing: CD*

On the one hand, this is Hot Topic punk dealing with religion and I have no time for it. On the other hand, and I do mean this, if you're an adolescent questioning your conservative religious upbringing, this could be a cathartic listen. Feels like an especially long forty-four minutes of pop punk and I wondered a couple times if The Matrix produced this in 2003 (they didn't). I'll also say I'm grateful for the occasional saxophone on this album. —Matt Werts (Fat Wreck Chords)

#### DISMALS, THE: *Self-titled: 7" EP*

Crunchy, thuddy punk that packs a wallop. At times they sound reminiscent of Southern punk legends The Normals—mid-tempo, raw, but easily memorable. —Jimmy Alvarado (Arkam)

#### DISSEKERAD: *Self-titled: EP*

A straightforward hardcore punk attack played by some of the Swedes who helped define the genre, (ex-Avskum,

Totalitär, and Krigshot), Dissekerad, Swedish for "dissected," deliver four tracks that capture everything I love about the genre. Fast and angry—with shredding guitars, and thundering drums—that make you want to grab your best friend and bum rush the pit. This self-titled 7" was a limited-edition release for the band's performance at the Varning From Montreal Festival and brief North American tour. While others may have long-since stopped screaming at walls, these Swedes sound ready to tear down the system with their bare hands. One listen to this record and you'll be right along with them. —Paul J. Comeau (Varning)

#### DISTRACTIONS, THE: *Sometimes I Drink: CD*

Four piece from South Bend that loves Face To Face so much they did a parody of one of their record covers on their bandcamp page. Those influences are featured, but since they have been grinding it out since 2008, they have refined their own sound now. The songs are about drinking, fighting, and not being a fan of our current president. If you can get behind these ideas, then buy this album and start a fan club today! —Sean Koepenick (Smoking Cat)

#### DOG COMPANY: *High Hopes in Hard Times...: LP*

I first became aware of Dog Company from Dallas when I saw them play at the 2000 Tons of TNT fest in Hartford, Conn. in 2012. Other bands I saw that

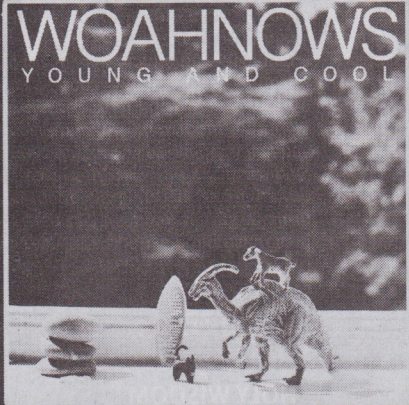
weekend included The Bruisers, Stars And Stripes, Anti-Nowhere League, Evil Conduct, The Meatmen, Giuda, The Templars, Close Shave, Pist 'N' Broke, No!se, Yellow Stitches, Hammer And The Nails, Usual Suspects, Hatin' 'Em, Infa-Riot, Negative Approach, The Dwarves, Menace, Patriot, The Warriors, Bitter End, Hub City Stompers, Death Before Dishonor, and Rival Mob. So it was quite a testament to Dog Company's greatness that even in that company, I was beyond impressed. I've followed them ever since, and this new record is simply fantastic. Unabashedly influenced by many catchy breeds of punk and hardcore, this isn't tough guy oi. Instead, you get thoughtful, melodic tracks in the vein of Reducers SF or Bonecrusher, but with a singular twist that's all their own. Yes, you need this record! —Art Ettinger (Crowd Control Media)

#### FLAG OF DEMOCRACY: *No School, No Core: LP*

Guilty confession time: this is the first F.O.D. album I've ever owned. Sure, I've heard plenty by 'em over the last thirty-four years or so, and I've always meant to pick up their newest release at given points over the decades, but no, dumbass me never followed through. Glad this situation has now been rectified and this is a doozy of a record to start off with. Things jump off with them mining the crazed thrash that's long been their stomping grounds, and

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that is largely the order of the day aside from the odd moment they slow things down. They're tight and wild, with the "melody" manifesting in the chord changes and the lyrics as pointed as ever. Spot-on, devastating in delivery and aces all 'round. —Jimmy Alvarado (Boss Tuneage / SRA)

#### GARY LLAMA: *New Folk*: CD

The title is a bit misleading, since it is not all acoustic singalongs here. But the Richmond artist recorded all of this on his own, using his engineering skills to good effect. "Richmond Redevelopment Society" is the standout song here. From what I can see online, this artist is doing it all on his own and that's admirable. —Sean Koepnick (Ovofr!)

#### GERMS: *What We Do Is Secret*: LP

I'm newly forty-five years old and I still kinda want a Germs burn. Such is the way of Darby Crash and company: their truth continues to be viral (like an infection). This clear blue Record Store Day release collects some extant recordings (though not the awesome title track), some archival stuff, and some live tracks, including patter from their very last gig at the Starwood (the record ends with Darby saying he'll "see (us) all at Oki Dog," though presumably not the big one in the sky). If you are burned or otherwise afflicted you've already tracked this one down. —Michael T. Fournier (Slash/Org)

#### GINO AND THE GOONS: *"I Won't Fall In Love" b/w "Parasite"*: 45

My favorite *Tom & Jerry* cartoon when I was a kid involved a sight gag where some cowboy singer on their TV kept breaking strings on his guitar, then reaching through the screen and yanking a whisker off of Tom's startled puss to use as a replacement. I thought that was just the wildest thing, *reaching through the TV screen!* That episode and the vast trans-dimensional potentiality at which it hinted must've damaged me more than I realized, because as soon as I threw this platter on, I started dancing, lest Gino pop his head out of my stereo speakers and start berating me for my lack of getting down, and being part of the problem and not part of the solution, and having my parents be unreasonably proud of me due to my good behavior. I mean, I *literally started dancing without even thinking about it*. That's what they call "enlightened self-preservation." Anyway, I realize it is counterproductive to critique the audio fidelity of a Gino And The Goons record —not to mention being the kind of thing that would surely invite a beration from a Gino-head magically erupting from my speakers—but side A is kinda getting there. Side B fares better, just because it's cool to observe how majestically GATG are able to synthesize ersatz Thunders/Lure-ism on demand. *With god as my witness, I am shaking it down, brother, and demand to be part of the solution!* BEST SONG & SONG TITLE: "Parasite." FANTASTIC AMAZING

TRIVIA FACT: It is customary to sing "Call Me Animal" at Gino when he enters a public swimming area. —Rev. Nørð (Certified PR)

#### GINO AND THE GOONS: *"I Won't Fall In Love" b/w "Parasite"*: 7"

Two tracks if slinky, swaggering rock'n'roll, recorded just shitty enough to benefit from the rawness, but not so shitty that things devolve into an unlistenable din. Thumbs up. —Jimmy Alvarado (Certified PR)

#### GINO AND THE GOONS: *She Was Crushed*: EP

You shall be crushed also by this fantastic four-song EP. Gino And The Goons at their most lo-fi, plus all their Ramones-isms. Think Supercharger covering Head (imagine if Gino shared a bill with Head!) The Goons have that get down sound, plus saxophone. Just let it take you there. Hopefully you didn't sleep on the super limited release third LP that preceded this here release, missing it completely like a certain me. —Sal Lucci (Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

#### GLOWING BRAIN: *Self-titled*: CS

With marijuana leaves in the artwork, and a song title referencing wizards, I thought I knew what this was going to sound like going in, and from the opening crescendo of "Wizard Wand," it was clear my instincts were not too far off. Glowing Brain are a noise rock trio from Oakland, Calif. The wall of sound the band produces

is the sort of thing that would make Nigel Tufnel proud. The anger of the lyrics in "Stooge" combined with the noodling riffs made it my favorite track, though the Motörhead-esque riffing in the follow-up track "Suffer Fools" certainly gave it a run for its money. While I rolled my eyes at the marijuana leaves in the artwork, Glowing Brain is a band to check out whether you're 420 friendly or not. —Paul J. Comeau (Don't Look Down)

#### GREAT AMERICAN HOUSE FIRE: *Promise Me Endings*: 12" EP

Colorado's Great American House Fire write mature punk that lands somewhere between the defiant spirit of Songs For Moms and the slow burn of Sunny Day Real Estate. Within the first fifteen seconds, Kristin Garramone's commanding voice grabs me—it's confident and powerful. I feel it deep down when Garramone sings, "I got summertime left in my bones / Winter darkness all up in my soul." The introspective lyrics are supported by complex basslines and jangly, intertwining guitars (GAHF boast a whopping three guitarists). *Promise Me Endings* is heart-wrenching, thoughtful, and hopefully a teaser for a full-length yet to come. —Sean Arenas (Snappy Little Numbers)

#### HAKAN: *///*: LP

Charming and melodic and relentless pop punk from Italy that might appeal to The Marked Men/Radioactivity/Spits crowd. Not especially deep, and I

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think there are some cultural references going over my head, but it works in the logic of powerpop. I believe these guys. —Matt Werts (Brassneck / One Chord Wonder)

#### HALE BOPP ASTRONAUTS / SODA CITY RIOT: Split: 7"

These two fantastic mainline punk bands from South Carolina have such primeval passion, you can almost disassociate them from the "big" bands they're influenced by. Each group has a way above-average singer, and they're both melodic without being overly cutesy. Face To Face fans will love this split, containing four of the catchiest sing-song tracks I've heard in a good while. Housed in a beautiful silkscreened cover and pressed on colored vinyl, everything about this record is a class act. I eagerly await full-lengths from each of these totally kickass bands. —Art Ettinger (River Monster)

#### HAMMERLOCK: *Glory Never Dies*: LP

One of the better-known of the bands associated with the once-prominent Confederacy of Scum, Hammerlock was one of the few groups to emerge from that scene to not hail from the South. Oakland might seem like an unlikely place for one of the best county-influenced punk bands of all time to rise from, but Hammerlock defied stereotypes from their inception. Husband and wife Elizabeth and Travis Kenney formed Hammerlock over two decades ago and keep the energy level

high on this new album, available on both vinyl and CD. I've had the pleasure of seeing Hammerlock live, and the production here well-captures their in-person sound, which is a terrifically in-your-face blend of country and Poison Idea-style punk. The cover art was created by the talented Ryan Almighty, a controversial figure who uses his own blood in his paintings. Definitely seek this killer release out. As long as they keep it up with records like *Glory Never Dies*, Hammerlock will never die. —Art Ettinger (CMGR)

#### HAN GAN: *The City of Magnificent Intentions*: CD

Three piece from Alexandria, Va. so DC punk stylings plays a large part here; so much that this makes me think that if Guy from Fugazi jammed with Shudder To Think this might be the end result. "Soul's Fire Escape" is one song that I keep coming back to out of the batch. I am a bit puzzled on "Ride (Like the Wind)" however. It says that it is "inspired" by Christopher Cross. Unfortunately, I know my lite rock a bit too well and this sounds like a cover to my ears. I don't think this will get you out of paying royalties here, guys! —Sean Koepenick (Participle)

#### HAYLEY AND THE CRUSHERS: *Cool/Lame*: CD

If I am allowed to generalize my Hayley And The Crushers experience in a tragically mundane but nevertheless effective manner, I'd say they were a somewhat less '60s-dependent version

of Shannon And The Clams, albeit one with vocals significantly more apt to be on key. If I pay attention a bit more, I can discern bits of early Blondie in the mix—i.e., vaguely dangerous urban imagery ("Parking Structure Girl" "Threat Level Red") pleasingly drizzled atop a sweet crunch of indeterminate nutritional value—plus the occasional glimmer of a Lene Lovich-like otherworldliness ("Ten Thirty-Nine"). Once in a while, something is good enough that it straight-up whaps me upside the head ("Bad Girls" "Cool Is the New Lame") like The Like minus the cool dresses (which wouldn't've gone all that well with the beards anyway). My takeaway is that there are a lot of cool things happening on this record, if you are paying attention to it—but it's fairly easy to have the record just slide into the background on you, and then you're like "yeah, yeah, Shannon And The Clams, whatever" and you're not really engaging, and a shocking disservice is done to the cause of Rock. *Sorry, Rock!* I think the presence of such a well-worn Ramones cover might be part of the problem; it seems to suggest that it's fine to not take the album altogether seriously. Shoulda went with "Scattergun." Oh well, crush on, you crazy diamonds! BEST SONG: "Bad Girl." BEST SONG TITLE: "Parking Structure Girl." FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT: Their cover of "Teenage Lobotomy" is listed simply as "Lobotomy." Odd. —Rev. Nørð (Eccentric Pop)

#### HIGHER STATE, THE: *Ten Clear Petals* b/w "Dark Night of the Soul": 7"

Recorded on retro gear, The Higher State have a solid instinct for the groove of the time when psych giants roamed the land. "Ten Clear Petals" would feel at home on any "Back from the Grave"-style series, fuzzing it up with overdriven guitars and keyboards pumped out at an R & B speed in the best Texas psych/pre-punk tradition. "Dark Night of the Soul" slows the roll a bit with eerie keyboards and a late-night-snack-and-staring-out-the-window-at-that-tree-for-a-few-minutes appeal. But we all know being retro is not enough: The Higher State practice good songwriting. A good song is a good song regardless if you're in 2018 looking back or in 1968 looking forward. You can put yourself there if you try. Sit back. Relax. Namaste. —Billups Allen (13 O'Clock)

#### IDAHO GREEN: *Rancher Bones*: 7"

Idaho Green fucking rip. With screeching, guttural vocals and howling guitars, the New York-based quartet are one part Meat Puppets and another part Pissed Jeans. Side A is comprised of "Rancher Bones," a nearly six-minute cacophony of spiraling guitars that builds to a blistering climax. It's exhausting and thankfully never tedious. But just when you think you have Idaho Green figured out, "Body Language" opens with an infectious catchy guitar riff punctuated by rich vocal harmonies that nearly sound like The Killers. It's truly dizzying. If

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you're looking for a 7" that's wacky, heavy, and totally refreshing, look no further than *Rancher Bones*. —Sean Arenas (Satellite Tribe / Minor Bird)

#### INCISIONS: Self-titled: LP/CD

TNS really does have its finger on the pulse of the U.K. punk scene and the debut album from Incisions is proof positive of its continuing good taste. This Manchester quartet displays its influences of '80s USHC and punchy U.K. punk across a dozen tracks lasting less than a total of twenty minutes. The result is a highly efficient, angry album, built upon a blend of those influences, neither one being overpowering. I like the vocals, the brevity of the songs, and also the anger that is evident. Good stuff and I love how the vocalist pronounces "fucking" as "fooking" with his Mancunian accent. —Rich Cocksedge (TNS)

#### INTERCOURSE:

##### *Everything Is Pornography When You've Got an Imagination: LP*

Dissonant, jerky-jerky rhythmed noise rock with ranting vocals. Not without its charms, not for the squeamish, not easy listening by any stretch. —Jimmy Alvarado (Constant Disappointment)

#### INVISIBLE TEARDROPS, THE / TONY'S BITE: Split: 7"

Spectacular spooky split platter from Snuffy Smiles! The Invisible Teardrops vibe hard in the shadowy recesses of your mom's wood-paneled basement. Three tracks filled with the innocent

danger of doing debatably bad things down in the dark under the nose of your ma and pa. Rocking organ and hip-swinging punk groove. If the *Monster Squad* movie had been made in the '60s instead of the '80s, you'd be close to The Invisible Teardrops. Tony's Bite deliver faster, sharper, twisted trebled madness. Slightly nasal vocals that sting just as deep as the tunes slice. Almost a cult camp side and kinda like the audio equivalent of watching *The Brain That Wouldn't Die*. Yeah, I'll be rocking this one all through October. —Matt Seward (Snuffy Smiles)

#### JAGGER HOLLY: *The Last of the International Playboys: LP*

Jagger Holly are the newcomer reigning champions of European pop punk. It's super slick Ramones-style tunes, featuring Matt from DeeCracks—no frills, catchy songs from the beginning to end. Some people lament this genre, others live for it. If that's your thing, there really won't be much for you to be disappointed in here. The video/single, "It Ain't Over ('til I'm Sober)" is fine, but not totally representative of what the band is capable of. "Summer's Gone" (also released on the *Punk Rock Raduno #3* compilation), on the other hand, is. It's *thee* hit, a pop punk song so catchy it'll make Teenage Bottlerocket say, "Shit, I wish I'd written that." This LP is bound to put them on the map on the other side of the pond. —Steve Adamyk (Mom's Basement / Monster Zero)

#### JAMES STEVENSON: *40 Years in the Rock 'n' Roll Wilderness: 2 x CD*

Massive two disc collection that cherry picks from his career in the rock world. We get a snapshot of his time with Chelsea, Generation X, Charlie Harper, and Glen Matlock. There are also a few songs from The Alarm that get a kick in the pants courtesy of Stiff Little Fingers drummer Steve Grantley. But it is the more obscure material here that was intriguing more than anything (Hot Club, Henry Badowski, and The Smart, to rattle off a piece of this collection). A collaboration with Gary Holton (Heavy Metal Kids) also makes its first official appearance as well. The end features a handful of tracks from his first-ever solo record from a couple years back. A fantastic collection that will spur you to dig deeper into his impressive body of work. —Sean Koeppenick (Pink Gun)

#### JYUNA: *This Desolate Veil: LP*

This is the first vinyl pressing of a 2002 album by self-described "heavy screamo" band Jiyuna from Fort Myers, Fla. It takes me back to the days of thrift store youth soccer T-shirts and Dr. Spock haircuts, and has all the trappings of this era: octave chords, throat-shredding screams, clean guitar breaks with frantic off-key singing... but they do it all with a powerful sense of dynamics, a sneaky sense of melody, and strong musicianship that places them way above average. I was deep into this scene back in the day, to the point where I'm surprised I never heard this band. I wish I had. They're

fucking good. Pick it up if you're into Funeral Diner, Maximillian Colby/Sleepytime Trio, or Majority Rule. —Chris Terry (IFB)

#### KAREN MEAT:

##### *You're an Ugly Person: LP*

Wow, this album is so cute, unfiltered, and real. Intro song "Share a Dinner" is full of Omnichord and drum machine goodness, accompanied by a beautiful guitar. It's an honest pop song about wanting to take someone out on a date, but being poor, and opting to stare at each other and admire one another instead. Karen Meat (AKA Arin Eaton) believes that "realistically, pop songs should be fun and sad," a sentiment I can get behind, because as a Sagittarius, I love fun and harsh truth. The song titles are straightforward, and genuine, such as "You're an Ugly Person," "A Is for Asshole," and "Bored on Tour." I love the way all the beats layer over each other, and the album is very well produced. The guitar riffs on "You're an Ugly Person" are so good, and fit the composition beautifully. "Overdwelled" is a blunt and direct song to the partner who broke up with Arin in front of their family, calls them out on how they treated her and what a terrible person they are. I wish more people called out their truth in break up songs, because the honesty is refreshing and relatable. Dana Telsrow's vocals come in on the heavy '80s-synth influenced "I Thought We Were OK," and although the lyrics in this song are simple, they describe how

## 2018 sucked except we got to put out some

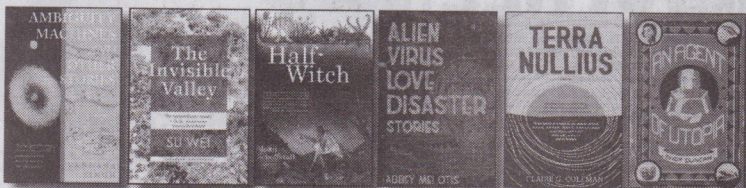
great books. Some of them received great reviews, some of them — no matter what we tried — it's silence out there. Readers like them even though we don't have the \$\$\$ for marketing campaigns big enough to break through the daily shitshow that is the US news and government show.

2018 Snapshot: 6 books ★ 7 starred reviews ★ 5 US debuts ★ 4 writers of color ★ 3 novels, 3 short story collections ★ 3 women, 3 men ★ 1 translation ★ 2 NPR Best of the Year ★ 1 *Washington Post* Best of the Year

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— *Publishers Weekly* (Starred Review)



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many have felt when they thought they were okay in a relationship (friendship or romantic), but things were not. If you are into honesty, synths, pop, and relatable songs, this album is for you. —Cynthia Pinedo (Emotional Response)

#### L'AMOUR:

##### Look to the Artist 1978-1981: LP

A collection of recordings from a long-gone band that apparently was one of the linchpins of the early Richmond, Va. punk scene which included members of Beex and The Prevaricators. Included are the tracks from their sole 7", some demos, and tracks from a board tape, all of which sound friggin' great considering we're talking about tapes from forty-odd years ago. Being the L.A.-centric dweeb I am, they remind me of a cross between the Zeros and Simpletones—minimalist rock with a bit of punk bite. Limited to five hundred with liner notes, assorted picks, and the like. —Jimmy Alvarado (Beach Impediment)

#### LADY HUMP: Drug Knife: CD

Largely mid-tempo with a rock undertow, a bit of blues, track titles like "Disease Is the Cure," "Penis Colada," and "Black Camaro," and a bit of irreverence in the lyrical department. Bet they're a hoot live, judging by what's here. —Jimmy Alvarado (Water Under The Bridge)

#### LANDMINE HEART: "No Direction Home" b/w "White Line Fever": 7"

A couple fast rippers from this Dutch quartet, Landmine Heart's brand of

drug-influenced punk'n'roll is damn catchy. The track "White Line Fever," not to be confused with that other track "White Line Fever," by Motörhead, or that other "White Line Fever," track by Merle Haggard, features some of the best guitar work, with a pretty mean lead. I actually preferred that track over "No Direction Home," despite the latter's catchy chorus. —Paul J. Comeau (Aggrobeat)

#### LAZEAR: Self-titled: LP

Some kind of strange mix of power pop, garage rock, and the quiet-loud-quiet-loud school of '90s alternative rock. King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard would be a good comparison point, just without the twelve-minute-long jams. Or maybe Audacity with a stronger Ty Segall influence? The choruses are tight and catchy with remarkable angular guitar work during the verses. This gets my award for best album this review cycle. Seven absolutely solid tracks, with a really lovely cover art design. Recommended. —Gwen Static (MPLS LTD)

#### LEOPARD PRINT TASER:

##### Teeth Are Not Bones: 7" EP

Leopard Print Taser have come out fighting: in a little over a year, this Somerville combo of experienced hardcore and explosive new raw talent have gone beyond buzz into a full-on essential part of the scene. With two members of Boston favorites Lunglust and two members who hadn't played in a live band before, Leopard Print

Taser brings in the best of punk. It's tight without being reigned in, with Leila Bower's vocals moving between frustrated growls and sarcastic recitation in a way that highlights how playful the band can be while still hitting hard on topics like abuse, misogyny, and figuring out the difference between being who you are and being someone else. This EP is ready to explode; full of ideas and pathways that'll become a great LP. Can't wait to see it. —Theresa W. (Tor Johnson / War Fever)

#### LIPID: Freak Beat: CS

"Have Another Beer with a Band that Sounds like Fear." Decent but ultimately unremarkable. I feel like seeing these guys live would be a different experience. Maybe it's just the recording, but it didn't sound like it had the right kind of energy. It just felt a little limp. Sometimes recordings just don't happen at the right moment. That's just speculation, of course. At its best, this release sounds like a more musically complex Circle Jerks. I could see their next release being a lot more engaging if they play to their strengths. —Gwen Static (Vinyl Conflict)

#### LONE WOLF: Self-titled: CD

Pencils down please. Best of 2018 list making is over. And at the top of the heap for AOTY is Lone Wolf. Every single track is a complete ear worm. They sound like a three car pile up with vehicles helmed by Big Eyes, Marked Men, and Sugar Stems. I purchased the CD from the band themselves,

but don't always have a CD player around (and I've been cut off on Bandcamp because I've played it too many times!). This band is from The Netherlands and features a member from The Accelerators. Most of the lead vocals are covered by guitarist Merel with backups done by Ox. I can not believe how incredible every single song is, "Side of the Road" in particular. If that was the last song I ever heard, I still don't think I'd get sick of replaying it in my head. So many bands I've listened to that are after that power pop sound tend to fall just shy of the mark. Lone Wolf moves the goal posts. Every guitar hook is a love song to a rock'n'roll heart. The bass never overpowers; just bridges the gap between rhythm and melody. And that drummer knows just when to throw in eighth notes on the hi hat, quarters on the ride, and double taps on the snare. I try not to be hyperbolic ever, but this is one of the best records I've ever heard and I hope the whole world listens. It's the closest thing to perfect. This is the reason I tread through mediocre and terrible music. —Kayla Greet (Stardumb / Bearded Punk)

#### LOSER: Restless Noise: CD

Goddamnit, this record is so pretty. I'm obviously supposed to compared this to the fuzzed-out grunge of the '90s but that's not fair to Loser. Every one of these five songs is better than pretty much everything that came out twenty years ago. Fuck that nostalgia. We can enjoy a sound that's built on the past

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but brings a presence to the table as well. I don't want to gate keep music. Let it breathe and grow. With members of Smith Street Band and The Bennies, these dudes float in on clouds made of felt and sandpaper. It's soft, sweet, and unassuming from the outset. But a closer experience will show you the rugged thorns sheathed just below the surface. The cadence in "Restless Noise" is wonderful and truly delivers a song I wanted to memorize instantly. For my first few listens, I felt like "Some Say" was a slump in the record. Though even their 'weakest' song is light years better than most music (cough, Nirvana, cough). "Vacation" has this innate ability to remind me both of Shellshag's "Resilient Bastard" and Fugazi. The real standout for me here though is "Phase Me." That song is now my go-to for any shitty mood, or the greatest day I ever had. It's my sonic security blanket and I want it around all the time. I found out about this on Ryan Young's Anxious and Angry podcast and haven't been able to break away from it since. —Kayla Greet (Domestic Lala)

#### MANDATES: *Dead in the Face*: LP

Western Canada's kings of rock'n'roll are back with another ten tracks of ultra-slick, guitar slinging action. *Dead in the Face*, produced as usual by Pat Kearns (of Exploding Hearts fame), makes this album shine like it should, not unlike the band's last two efforts. To me, Mandates are the Canadian parallel of NYC's Wyldlife, and that's

a compliment. This LP sounds closer to a revved/punked-up Cheap Trick than ever, and everything is right where it needs to be. This band is a pinnacle of Canadian punk from the last ten years, featuring members of No Problem, Territories, Feel Alright, among others. If this sounds like your thing, don't hesitate. Fitting for the band to now call This Is POP Records home. —Steve Adamyk (This Is POP)

#### MARKED MEN, THE: *On the Other Side*: LP

It's kind of weird reviewing a Marked Men record in 2018. I mean, it's been a solid decade since their last full-length record but if anything, the love for Denton's finest has only grown in that time. Being the completist nerd I am when it comes to my favorite bands, I already have all the singles that this compilation pulls from, but it's a Marked Men release so here we are (not to mention the unreleased tracks, but more on them later). Let's face facts here. You're reading *Razorcake* so it is safe to say that you are familiar with The Marked Men. Garage punk via power pop. Often unintelligible lyrics that somehow still manage to stick in your head for days, weeks, months on end. It is beyond me how any one band has a right to have written so many perfect songs. The singles span their entire recorded existence, from the debut single on Mortville Records in 2003 up to their final single "On" b/w "The Other Side" on 540 Records in 2010. There is not a throw away

track in the bunch, including the two unreleased numbers "Disappear" and "Don't Cry." There are no dates given for those ones, but to me they sound on the earlier side, and do not disappoint. On one hand, it is upsetting to me that there will most likely never be another new Marked Men album, but on the other hand when you have a damn near perfect discography, perhaps it's best to leave well enough alone... Nah, I'd give almost anything for a new Marked Men album. You know damn well it would be perfect, too. —Ty Stranglehold (Dirtmap)

#### MEAN CAESAR: *Self-titled*: 12" EP

I'm sure I won't be the only person to listen to this and think of Leatherface during the first track "The Lane," such is the similarity in terms of the twin guitar drive and gravelly vocals on this one-sided 12". However, it's not a comparison which overwhelms the undoubted ability of this London (U.K.) band to make a mark for itself. The six big-sounding tracks are drenched in a melodic melancholy and I would suggest that whiskey would be the best beverage to partake of to create the perfect listening experience. A very good record from a band deservedly getting a lot of love on social media. —Rich Cocksedge (Little Rocket)

#### MEAN JEANS: *Jingles*: CD

Long time Mean Jeans fan, first time *Mean Jingles* (missed opportunity for the album name) reviewer here. *Jingles* is the pop punk product placement

album that I didn't know I needed. I heard Mean Jeans play a few pre-release jingles when I saw them in January, including "Hot Pockets," and was both amazed, and not surprised. Mean Jeans has referenced brands in past songs, including Applebees in "2 Twisted 2 Luv U," Cheerios and Frosted Flakes in "Anybody Out There," Keystone Light in "Case Race," Coors Light in "4 Coors Meal" and "I Miss Outer Space," Capri Sun in "School Lunch Victim," and many more, so this seemed natural. This album is part traditional Mean Jeans songs, part ode to their favorite brands, and part jingles. The songs are so catchy (as a jingle should be), and are sure to get stuck in your head, especially singing "Applebees," "Sizzler," or "Wendys (Junior Bacon Cheeseburger)" as suggestions anytime someone asks what you want for dinner. These songs are reminiscent of the commercial tunes that would come on during a break from your favorite early '90s Nickelodeon show, or in between The Simpsons, causing you to beg your mom for Cheez-Its and Capri Sun at the grocery store. Most jingles clock in under a minute, but a few hit the one-minute ballad mark with an extended story. My favorite songs include, "180069SHRED," "Polly-O String Cheese," and the previously mentioned restaurant jingles. Usually, people are against their favorite brands "selling out," but I would love for any of the brands on this album to use their song. Admit it; commercials would be so much better with a mean jingle. —Cynthia Pinedo (Fat Wreck Chords)

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**MEAN JEANS: Jingles: LP**

Wow. What an annoying record. It actually made me a little bit angry. It's possibly mildly humorous for about thirty seconds? Obviously, people are free to do what they want, but I couldn't help but ponder the waste of time and money that went into making this. It's not funny, cute, or clever—the ultimate inside joke maybe? Don't fall for it! I couldn't bring myself to listen to the second side; there's good music out there! Although this possibly makes me sound much more curmudgeonly than I really am, I'll say it—I'm not the slightest bit interested in this nonsense. —Jennifer Federico (Fat Wreck Chords)

**MEWITHOUTYOU: [Untitled]: CD/LP**

It's easily been fifteen years since I first saw mewithoutYou. Over the course of those years the band has gone from an emo-hardcore band to a folk-influenced act, and everything in between. I've found their albums to be real hit and miss, but always enjoyed their heavier, more aggressive work. [Untitled] is, I'm happy to say, much more up my alley. While mewithoutYou went with the same producer (Will Yip) as their last album, the sound seems to have amped up and become the fullest example of who the band is. Aaron Weiss's warbled spoken word vocals occasionally explode into screams. The music is jangly at times, but heads more into chugging guitars and pounding beats more often than not. There are slow moments, but on

the whole mewithoutYou does their best work when they channel Fugazi, and they certainly do that here. If you haven't listened to this band before but miss Fugazi and enjoy talented, angular rock music that gives you occasional goosebumps (it's asking a lot, I know), then start here. You won't be disappointed. —Kurt Morris (Run For Cover)

**MICHAEL KANE AND THE MORNING****AFTERS: Laughing at the Shape I'm In: 7"**

Now, this is the kind of thing that I just love! Mid-tempo punk rock'n'roll single that comes on like the Ducky Boys and the, more recent Hudson Falcons stuff. It appears to be on the label of Mark Lind of the Ducky Boys, so I suppose that makes sense. Good songwriting and strong gravelly vocals; I can never get too much of this stuff. Really wanna hear a full length by this Boston area band. Top shelf, can't wait to hear more. —Mike Frame (State Line)

**MISCALCULATIONS:****Sharp Solution: 12" EP**

Single-sided vinyl really seems to be big these days and here is another one, this time from this London band. I wasn't aware of this quartet beforehand so had no idea what I would encounter. Across the five tracks, Miscalculations sound a bit like Marked Men if someone decided to add some electro punk into the mix. Seeing that I liked this so much I am now aware that the band has four albums out—one

of which I now own—plus a host of singles too. I'd certainly recommend Miscalculations to anyone who likes Marked Men and bands of that ilk. —Rich Cockedge (Rockstar)

**MODERN CONVENIENCE:****So So Modern: LP**

Garagey, minimalist punk. There's a bit of an arty sheen to things, which makes sense considering one or more members were affiliated with Antique Curtains. Things can sound a bit atonal at first blush but its charms bear through with more listens. —Jimmy Alvarado (What's For Breakfast)

**MR. GODSON (WILL BE THE LAST ONE TO SURVIVE) / ROCK N ROLL TELEVISION: Split: CD**

This split begins with France's Mr. Godson. It started off intriguing and was evocative of the intro to Blink-182's "The Rock Show." The recording is very clean sounding, but once the vocals came in, I wasn't as into it. The lead singer's growly, heavy French accent and gang vocals seemed overpowering on "Let's Start a Fire," and seemed a little pirate-y. I liked the background music, and think the drummer does a great job. The vocal style works a lot better on "Farewell," and seems more natural. "We Are the Last One to Survive" sounds like a mash-up of Bayside songs, but has too many elements going on. This band loves their gang vocals, and at times the lead vocals try to draw out slower over the fast tempo, but don't hit the

mark. There are also some weird, unnecessary echoey sound effects going on in the bridge, and sometimes more is too much. "Joy's Rage" starts off with a punk beat that leads into a rap rock vibe that is off-putting. This band doesn't have one set sound, and maybe they'll be the last one to survive because they keep throwing in every aspect of music that they know. I'm not here for it. Quebec's Rock N Roll Television's sound was a refreshing change from the confusion of the radio dial of whatever Mr. Godson was. I love a band that does heavy Ramones influence well, and Rock N Roll Television hits the mark. "Where's EJ" has fast drums, a nice guitar solo, and all the "whoa ohs" one could want. "Shark Attack" has a surfy feel to it which is fun, and both "I Don't Wanna Be Smart" and "I Wanna Be with You" have subtle hints of MxPx that blend well with their other influences. The blend of backup vocals are on point. I love a band that attempts Beach Boys layered vocals and does it well. I will definitely be checking out more of Rock N Roll Television. —Cynthia Pinedo (PCT Musique)

**MUDSEX / BUCKET FLUSH: Split: 7"**

This excellent scummy split from two GG Allin-loving bands is so blatantly cheeky, even the most politically correct brothers and sisters in our fold would likely concede the joke, whether or not they approve. Mudsex is from Chattanooga and features Josh Mayfield from recent lineups of

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-Cyttorak "4 Song Demo" cassette

FFO: Primitive Man/Neurosis

-Heavy Mantle "Weights & Measures" LP

FFO: Small Brown Bike/Cursive

-Leopard Print Taser "Teeth Are Not Bones" 7"

FFO: Bikini Kill/The Wipers/Polvo

-Sullest "Fashionable Male" cassette

FFO: Torche/Floor/Helms Alee

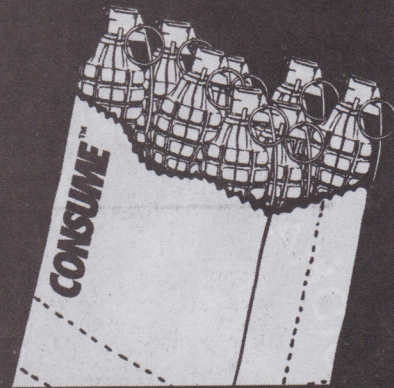


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Hellstomper. Like their earlier material, these tracks are fast, noisy, and raw, with a definite Southern punk influence peering in through the distorted vocals. Bucket Flush from Philadelphia has a similar lyrical sensibility, but musically has more of a 1990s streetpunk feel, reminding me of the better Rodent Popsicle bands from back in the day. This split is highly recommended for fans of catchy, humorous, filthy punk. I am enjoying it thoroughly. —Art Ettinger (WereOpossum)

**NEGATIVE SCANNER: *Nose Picker*: LP**

I dug Negative Scanner's debut of a few years back, which combined jagged songwriting with chilly effected sounds. Their sophomore release *Nose Picker* is a step in a different, interesting direction: the group relies more on immediacy and percussive songwriting than on their last rec, to dazzling results. Singer Rebecca Valeriano-Flores's pained yowl sounds like some unholy melding of Johnny Rotten and Marissa Paternoster. Her vox often sound like another instrument in the mix, but don't sleep on her lyrics, which pack precise wallops in each song. One of my favorites of 2018. —Michael T. Fournier (Trouble In Mind)

**NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS:**

***Claw Marks*: LP**

For a while the future looked pretty bleak for Neighborhood Brats. Not long after the release of their debut album *Recovery*, the band announced that they'd be taking a hiatus. Core

members Jenny and George needed some time to figure out what they were doing after another rhythm section had moved on. For all intents and purposes, it was a far too premature end for one of the best bands to come out of the last decade. Then the great *Night Shift* single came out and murmurs of a new LP made the rounds. Well, rumors became a reality and the Brats are back with their second album. Scorching from beginning to end, *Claw Marks* shows us a new side of Neighborhood Brats. It is a damn near perfect blend of the early singles' scrappy, nothing to lose attitude with the darker, more ethereal feel of *Recovery*. The result is an album that is incredibly cohesive. The songs move along quickly and sound really upbeat even though the lyrical content is often as serious as a heart attack. It is a cool feeling to be along for the ride with a band right from the beginning and listening to them grow into the band they've been destined to become. This album helps Neighborhood Brats take that next leap in my life from band I love to band that is one of my favorites of all time and completely indispensable to me. If you already know, you know. If you don't, give your head a shake and get this record. —Ty Stranglehold (Dirt Cult)

**NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS:**

***Claw Marks*: LP**

Another shimmering release of the truest-sounding modern punk that lovers of old school bands could ever wish to have dropped into our laps.

What did we do to deserve this? I guess this is what we get just for hanging on all these goddamn years. Jenny, George, & Co. make, break, and take it away, just to give it back and make you say please. What "it" is, that's up to you. For me it's the historical lineage of California punk. A sound divided by two major egos, but united by some of the best in the West. *Claw Marks* is a 383 mile laceration that rages harder and faster than any high-speed train ever could. Eleven tracks to further power the perpetual motion of the circle pit in your soul. —Daryl (Dirt Cult)

**NEON BONE: *That Dog Won't Hunt*: LP**

In the last few years, it's become very evident: Europe is the continent for modern day pop punk, hands down. The region is very well represented, after all. Holland and Austria's presence with Monster Zero and related bands has been obvious, but in recent years, Spain and Italy have exploded. Which brings us to Neon Bone, who are the current leaders in Germany (also with much love to the Haemmorrhoids). Neon Bone are a typical pop punk band, but their sounds leans to something of their own as well. On *That Dog Won't Hunt* specifically, I'm hearing a resemblance to Bracket (specifically "924 Forestville"), and, the odd time, even some of the more straight forward Swingin' Utters elements. The record has depth and great variance in tempo, which makes for a really enjoyable and cohesive listen. Another fine collaboration between

Mom's Basement and Monster Zero. —Steve Adamyk (Mom's Basement / Monster Zero)

**NEUROTIC FICTION: *Pulp Music*: LP**

Bristol's Neurotic Fiction write wistful power pop with a healthy dose of post-punk jitters. At times, they're twitchy and upbeat like early Blondie and The Nerves ("Social Animal" and "Mediator") but B Side opener "Bell Curve" shows off a moodier, more contemplative side: "To shake hands with the edge of the world / An unwise choice, an uttered word." Their surfy guitar riffs support the confident, dreamy vocal melodies. Holding everything together is the precise, minimalist drumming and pulsing basslines. Although only ten songs, *Neurotic Fiction's* debut LP is refreshingly succinct. It never meanders and remains laser-focused throughout. Highly recommended. —Sean Arenas (Specialist Subject)

**NEW JUNK CITY: *Same Places*: LP**

Dang, expectations are killers. And I never want to fault a band for organic growth and trying new shit out, right? That said, I absolutely loved the self-titled New Junk City record. It was pretty flawless, and still gets regular plays around here. The split they did a few years later with Robot (Re)pair was solid as well, so yeah, I had really high expectations for *Same Places*. And in some ways, those expectations were met—the band's tilling mostly familiar ground here: revisiting their folky,



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poppy punk that's moored in Americana and a lyrical lexicon based staunchly in heartache, stasis, and regret. It's still pretty catchy; simultaneously forlorn and buoyant. And there are a few gems for sure—a song like "Stay Asleep" wouldn't have been that out of place on the first album. Then there are efforts like the nearly five-minute-long "Losing Side," which relies almost entirely on a single riff and drags the record's momentum. So it's a mixed bag—New Junk City's still entirely *themselves*, you know, but not all the risks taken here land solidly. *Same Places* doesn't quite snag itself in this listener's ears, guts, et cetera as much as previous efforts. Still, sometimes records are immediate, and sometimes they take a while to find purchase. This one's good enough to keep listening to, trying to find that connection. —Keith Rosson (Night Animal)

#### NEW VOGUE:

##### **Birdcage (Slap Yourself Free): 7"**

Punk wave that sounds like it was recorded on a home 4-track. Very DIY sounding as a result, but the tunes are well constructed and don't degenerate into a sloppy amateurish mess. Nice bit o' work here. —Jimmy Alvarado (Spazz)

##### **NICKI TEDESCO: Sick as Freak: CD**

Nicki Tedesco is a veteran of the L.A. punk rock scene, most notably as the lyricist and bassist of Frantic Ginger. After years spent honing her bass skills, writing songs, and recording with bands, Nicki stepped out to make a solo

album with a harder sound inspired by her favorite rock bands of the nineties. Her feminine, wailing vocals juxtapose grungy dirges with support from Alex Guadagnoli on guitar and drums. Nicki champions young women to write their own songs and form their own bands; she also self-funds all her projects by giving bass lessons and posting gear review videos to Patreon and YouTube. Check out her channel and join her community of 3,000 subscribers to support this local DIY professional. —Michelle Kirk (The Strands L.A.)

##### **NIGHT TIMES: I Don't Mind: 7"**

A very strong two-song single with melodic garage rock vibes from this newer band. Above average songwriting and playing, along with top notch recording quality make this a real recommendation for fans of the style. Some real grit in the songs as well; almost comes on like a cross between the Sonics and Thee Midnights in spots. Garage heads are going to want to track this one down, for sure. —Mike Frame (Outro)

##### **PARASITES / RAGING NATHANS: Split: 7"**

First split release from the Parasites in over twenty years! How do I know this? Dave Parasite said it on stage when I saw them play in Rhode Island a little while back. They kick the proceedings off with two super catchy songs. With two songs by each band here, you really aren't required to pick favorites. I wasn't as familiar with Raging Nathans,

but I was pleasantly surprised by what I heard. More thrashy but still excellent. My copy was greenish blue; I believe there is a yellow variant out there. Grab them both to start a power pop rainbow. —Sean Koepenick (Dead Broke / Rad Girlfriend)

##### **PHONE JERKS: Self-titled: LP**

Like, technically, every time since the dawn of time, the heyday of Rip Off Records in the '90s was a time unlike any other. Nerds lustily debated the relative merits of each release, poring over every nuance of chord progression, production technique, pose, dress, and typeface as if we were witnessing the birth of some new, shitty little galaxy. Perhaps we were. With this in mind, I find it telling that whenever I attempt to hold forth on the music contained within this unrepentantly Rip Off Recordish record (I was thinking the Spastics when the drummer sings—kinda squeaky and explosive—and maybe the Canadian equivalent of early Registrators when she doesn't), I always find myself drifting into tangential analysis of the album cover and band photo instead. Like, *what does it mean when a rotary dial telephone is depicted on a garage punk album cover in 2018? What would it have meant in 1995? In 1977? Does the guy with the Gibson® look down on the guy with the Squier®? Does he know his socks say "Reebok?"* Paradoxically, if you start thinking about this shit instead of the music, the record is, somehow, doing its job.

While I doubt it can be argued that the ceiling for the amount of enhancement one can reasonably expect a record like this to visit upon one's life is nowhere near as high as it was twenty or twenty-five years ago, this record is, clearly, perfectly good, and you can quote me on that. Now who wants to argue about the Dangerhouse T-shirt? **BEST SONG** "Slit Wrist Twist." **BEST SONG TITLE:** "Violence Anarchy Baby Mother Daddy-O Dig," which I am to understand is a cover. **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** *Dude has a beard.* —Rev. Nørb (Alien Snatch)

##### **PIG FRENZY: "I Don't Need You" b/w "Oral Moral": 7"**

Pig Frenzy is a recipe of mishmash: one part garage punk; one part surf punk; and a dash of anger. Amuse-bouche is French for "mouth amuser," and I feel like Pig Frenzy's 7" is an ear amuser. Celebrity chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten described amuse bouche as, "The best way for a great chef to express his or her ideas in small bites," and Pig Frenzy did that in just two songs. "I Don't Need You" begins with dark guitar riffs and a slow-building drum beat. The wailing from the feedback is ominous and makes me wonder if dark alley punk is a thing. It should be. The tempo picks up into a surf-inspired drum beat and garagey, guttural, yelling vocals. "Oral Moral" has the post-punk feel that the band had set out to achieve, then goes off every so often into spoken word, some yelling, and back up moans. The



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insert has several black and white party pictures of the band and phrases written around them, such as "All pigs are bastards," "A slimy fever dream," and "Dick friendly?!" whatever that means. They also self-describe themselves as "Pig Frenzy is trash," and "Easy listening for degenerates." Dark alley punk is now a thing, and so are amuse-bouche 7" albums. This album is the first release from new indie record label Spazz Records, and has a limited edition print of three hundred. —Cynthia Pinedo (Spazz)

#### PISSE:

##### **Hornhaut Ist Der Beste Handschuh: 7"**

Grade A Deutschpunk synth-trash. These four songs sound like a bull in a Korgshop. Barked German vocals, off-kilter twists and turns, it's bizarre, fun, aggressive music. Obviously made by weirdos, for weirdos. Total mongo-pogo vibes for the kids to lose whatever brain cells they have left. This bands seems like it would fit on a garage punk or hardcore punk show, and for that I applaud them. Kudos Pisse. —Daryl (Phantom, phantom.tk)

##### **PLAN NINE: I Ain't No Robot: 7"**

Jason at Supreme Echo Records must be running himself ragged. It seems like over the course of the last year I have picking up amazing archival releases of lost Canadian punk gems for almost every review cycle. That is a lot of releases and a lot of lost music. Much respect for taking on such a crucial task. This time around we

have another band I have never heard of before. Plan Nine from Calgary, Alberta circa 1980. The band released this single itself in a small number. It quickly faded away and is incredibly rare now. This release has the original four songs along with two demo tracks from 1982 and they all sound amazing. At that point in time, especially in rural Canada, punk did not have a definition or even a preconceived idea of what it was supposed to be. It was kids making it up as they went along. Plan Nine liked the Sex Pistols and The Jam and ended creating something more akin to The Wipers with hints of Devo and Modern Lovers in the mix. This is an amazing record! As usual, it is also accompanied with a comprehensive booklet that tells the history from the band's point of view as well as some photos, and a great story about the band's experiences playing pow wows on the neighboring Blood Reservation. It is starting to become shocking how many really great Canadian punk bands were out there in the early days that never really got their due. It is clear that Supreme Echo is out there trying to change that for everyone. Check this out! —Ty Stranglehold (Supreme Echo)

##### **PLEASE STOP!: Built to Die: 7"**

Minneapolis quartet Please Stop! have packed eleven tracks into *Built to Die*, their second 7" following 2017's *Power Suit and Dead Bodies 7"*. If you dug their earlier release, behind the wall of fuzz on *Built to Die* are tunes sure to please. When riffs that make you want

to dance, combine with words that make you want to sing along, you'll be so exhausted from rocking out to this that you'll have to yell "Please Stop!" —Paul J. Comeau (No Front Teeth)

##### **PONY NAMED OLGA, A: Ave Maria: LP**

I don't need another reason to love Berlin, but here's one anyway. A Pony Named Olga sound like a drive through Texas, with the *From Dusk Till Dawn* soundtrack lighting the way. If you're into Demented Are Go, Nekromantix, The Gun Club, or Throw Rag, go ahead and buy this record. —Ryan Nichols (Saustex)

##### **PRIVATE SCHOOL: Lost in Action: 7"**

Another day, another lost Canadian punk rock classic. That seems to be the motto at Supreme Echo. Here we have Vancouver's Private School. Starting in 1978, the band featured Dave Gregg on guitar (who would later join DOA) and quite simply put, were stunning. Morphing from art school jam sessions to one of the best punk bands in a city that has contemporaries such as The Subhumans and DOA is no small feat, Private School played in a vein not unlike a more rock'n'roll Pointed Sticks (Private School's original bassist Tony Bardach went on to play in Pointed Sticks) with saxophone and violin (!) in the mix. Why this band is not normally listed among the other Vancouver heavy hitters of the era is beyond me. The original five-song EP has been restored and sounds amazing (and there is also a bonus flexi included

with two more tracks). Come get your history lesson! —Ty Stranglehold (Supreme Echo)

##### **PROTON PACKS / THE LIVERMORES:**

##### **Party Time of Astronauts: 7"EP**

This split EP is another collaboration between America's Mom's Basement and the European braintrusts Monster Zero, I Buy Records, and Commando. Proton Packs and The Livermores are both two of Italy's finest of the genre: four insanely solid tracks of well performed, modern-Ramones perfection. Don't miss out on these bands taking over from afar. —Steve Adamyk (Mom's Basement / Commando / I Buy Records / Monster Zero)

##### **PUTZ, THE / PROTON PACKS:**

##### **International Split-Series Vol.: 3: 7"EP**

While Europe's wave of pop punk has been significant, The Putz are a band on the forefront of the American line of bands living the spirit of the '90s Lookout Records sound. Even though I've crossed paths with these incredibly nice guys before, I'd never actually heard their tunes, which I can now say are nothing short of great. Both songs are sharp, to the point, and well executed, just like they should be. I'll definitely need to hear one of the LPs. Proton Packs from Italy are no different. To-the-point, Ramones-style, all catchy and memorable. Again, if this genre is for you, you're going to want to be paying attention. —Steve Adamyk (Mom's Basement)

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**RACKATEES, THE: *Withdure: 7"* /CDEP**

Four tracks of highly effective melodic punk rock. One wouldn't be far off the mark considering the early EpiFat-type bands as being sources of inspiration for this Lawrence, Kan. outfit, given how it sounds. That means it's well produced, has a strong guitar, pounding drums, and oodles of melody. The wheel remains round and The Rackatees have no intention of making any changes to its design. However, these tracks do sound much better than those off the band's last release, a split 7" with Lysol Gang, and have more of an aural impact. Although I also love the vocals of Patrick Westerhaus, the icing on the cake is the six string input which provides some glorious lead fills across all the songs which pushes my air guitar skills to the limit. -Rich Cocksedge (Self-released, therackatees@gmail.com)

**RADON: *More of Their Lies: CS***

Guys, Radon is back! It's only been, what, twelve years since their last release? This record finds them one guitar player richer as Jen Vito from War On Women recently started pulling double duty. On this release, however, she only contributes vocals on three tracks, but it sure makes a hell of a difference. I can not get enough of "Go Forth and Hate One Another." Such an incredible earworm. They start the record off with a cover from an old Gainesville musician Jeff London who was in King Friday who has a song called "I Wish I Was in Radon." That Florida scene is a bit cyclical, I'd

say. Singer/guitarist Dave Rohm has this robustness to his voice that makes me think of Greg Antonito (Bouncing Souls) tinged with more grit and life experience. The last track is another cover from the band Jellyfish, which I'm not familiar with. The Radon version starts out with a buzzsaw pick scrape, then a couple chords on an unplugged guitar before they launch into that trademark melodic punk. Even after I've listened to this release several times over, I keep coming back to "Go Forth and Hate One Another." It's easily one of the best songs written this year. If you're a Radon fan, you already have this. If you're not, let's get started shall we? -Kayla Greet (Tiger Force Ultra / Dirt Cult)

**RADON: *More of Their Lies: CS***

In the '90s, Gainesville's Radon added some melancholy southern humor to the chug of East Bay punk and *voila* the underdog pop punk that Florida is known for was born. Now, Radon's a couple albums deep into a reunion, and they haven't missed a step. Here are twelve catchy songs by folks who are tired but keep going, laughing to keep from crying, and probably cracking jokes with the bartender. -Chris Terry (Tiger Force Ultra / Dirt Cult)

**RATCHETS, THE: *First Light: LP***

*Glory Bound*, which came out in 2006, constitutes for a classic album in my collection. On that record The Ratchets, seemingly effortlessly, merged ska, reggae, and anthemic Clash-style punk

stuff in a way that was refreshing, political and personal, catchy as living hell, authentic, and demanding of repeated listens. That record rules from start to finish. So expectations were way up there when I heard the band had a new album coming out. With ten originals and a Tom Robinson cover, all of the swagger and requisite parts seem to be in place. Songs like "Jammyland" and "Paterson" show they can still slow things down without losing the thread, and "World Trade Lungs" might be one of the best songs they've ever written; it's certainly the best song on the record. That said, there's just a little indefinable something missing here. I've listened to this thing again and again, trying to latch on to key elements, to get snagged by the hooks, but they're just not quite as prevalent as earlier efforts. I like *First Light*. It's well done, they've clearly put a ton of work into it, and it's got some outstanding moments. But, damn, it's not feverishly good, and almost all of their stuff is feverishly good, you know? -Keith Rosson (Pirates Press)

**REACTION, THE: *East End Rockers: 7"***

St. John's, Newfoundland is the easternmost city in Canada. It is as rural as it gets. For years, the only punk band I had ever heard from there in the early days was called Da Slyme. I have now learned that there was another band from St. John's that was intertwined with Da Slyme called The Reaction and thanks to yet another archival release from Supreme Echo I

am now in the know. The Reaction got going in 1978 with a bunch of rockers getting their minds around this new thing called punk rock. They list their early influences as the Sex Pistols and Ramones, but it is shocking how much they sound like The Damned to me. By 1981 the band was done, and their records were scarce. Another band lost to the snow drifts of time. Until now, that is. I really like this, and I love that it is accessible for the first time in almost forty years. -Ty Stranglehold (Supreme Echo)

**REAL KIDS, THE:*****See You on the Street Tonight: CD***

Crypt digs deep into this legendary Boston band's, uh, vault for a mother lode of rarities. The first ten tracks are culled from a rehearsal recording and the remaining fourteen or so tracks are taken from assorted live recordings circa 1976-'77. As might be expected, things can get a bit raw sound-wise, but never so much as to be unlistenable and—considering a number of the tunes here were never officially recorded—this'll easily become indispensable to both fan and completist alike. Great liner notes as well, with back stories on the recordings, commentary about each individual track, and so on. -Jimmy Alvarado (Crypt)

**REAL KIDS, THE:*****We Don't Mind If You Dance: CD***

Another archival release of live recordings from this revered Boston first-wave band. All but one of the tracks

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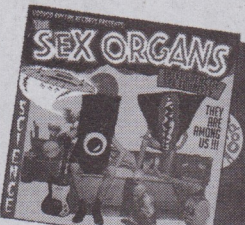
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come from various performances the band played in 1977-'78 from sources that sound like they were recorded from the audience and straight off the board, plus one track taken from an early rehearsal recording. Killer liner notes as well, with commentary about each track, pics of old flyers, and even several reproductions of old zine write ups. Dunno if this is an optimal place to start for Real Kids neophytes, but the performances are solid, the recordings never so raw as to be a slog to listen through, and the tunes themselves solid bits of tough-pop rock'n'roll. -Jimmy Alvarado (Crypt)

#### REGRET: *A Place Called Home: 7"*

A masterful display of d-beat-influenced hardcore which delivers four brain-rattling tracks, rendering the listener well and truly shaken. No quarter is asked and none is given as these Bristolians vent what seems like the rage of a million souls trapped in hell. Musically, this is tight and focused, with no room for any filler just a big, pummeling attack. The mix is better than it was on the previous single and that allows the drums to really shine—with much credit going to the drummer for taking up a lot of my focus when listening to this. I'll let the dust settle on this single and then start pestering the band for an album. -Rich Cocksedge (Urinal Vinyl / Pumpkin / Never Fall Into Silence / SVOBODA)

#### RIPCORD: *Harvest Hardcore: 7" EP*

This reissue of Ripcord's 1988 EP brings back memories of when them,

the Stupids, and others discovered American thrash and went full-on into sounds we were mining here a few years prior. Not to minimize their work, 'cause as evidenced here they handily made the sound their own; merely marveling at an interplay of ideas that seemed much more of a seismic shift in a pre-internet era. The bands they cover here provide good touchstones for their general plan of attack—SS Decontrol and Siege—resulting in short blasts of hyper-thrash that skirt being fast to the point of silliness. The English accents take a sec to get used to (I was hearing the chorus of "Subconscious Thoughts" as "some cunts in sports" and thought, "well that's not very neighborly of them...") but it's clear very early on here why they remain one of the more revered U.K. bands of that era. -Jimmy Alvarado (YOFC, yofcrecords.com)

#### ROCKET 808: *"Digital Billboards" b/w "Mystery Train": 7"*

Rocket 808 is the current project of John Schooley, noteworthy garage musician from the past twenty years, who's been a part of everything from Gearhead's Hard Feelings to The Revelators. Rocket 808's bio references a comparison to Link Wray crossed with Suicide. As much as it is a massive pet peeve of mine for reviewers to piggy back on lazy, prewritten content, I can't help but agree, since it's perfectly accurate, although I may have said Bloodshot Bill instead of Link Wray.

Great stuff—one instrumental and one more upbeat rocker of guitar work backed by a primitive-sounding drum machine. Looking forward to more. -Steve Adamyk (12XU)

#### RUIN BY DESIGN:

##### *From Ashes to Empowerment: CD*

Largely mid-tempo hardcore outta D.C. that occasionally heads down more sophisticated routes of punk rock expression. Nice 'n' clean recording, delivery isn't too over the top, and lyrically they sound like they're coming from a genuine place. -Jimmy Alvarado (Ruin By Design)

#### RUNHIDEFIGHT: *"He's a Jerk" b/w "Because I Love You": 7"*

The return of former Philly garage mainstay Geeta Simons (ex-Rockula and Swisher) is a quick two-song EP that features Simons on the jacket with her custom-made double-neck 12-string electric guitar and 12-string sitar. Between the doo-wop influence, the double-neck instrument, and Simons' green hair and sneering vocals, this band would play great in a Tarantino movie. Which strangely might fit with some of the overarching influences of RunHideFight, named after the terrifying new normal of how we teach children (and adults) to survive in the era of mass shootings. I'm one hundred percent sure that this band could set up in a basement, a garage, or a club and sound great and it's cool to see folks who just still believe that punk is what can save us now. -Theresa W. (Hidden Volume)

#### SAUCERS:

##### *Third Saucer from the Sun: LP*

Saucers were Rocket From The Tombs' Craig Bell's next musical foray following that legendary unit's dissolution and his move to Cleveland. Active from 1977-'80, they released two 45s before breaking up. Tracks from those records are included here along with assorted other tracks from different recording sessions, with stylistic choices running from proto-punk stompers reminiscent of Radio Birdman, to wavy quirk-jams, to jangly '60s-inflected pop. An A+ collection overall and a poignant reminder that some of the best punk has to offer doesn't always come from acts that have become brand names. -Jimmy Alvarado (Rerun)

#### SCHEISSE MINNELLI:

##### *Waking Up on Mistake Street: CD*

Album number five from these German skate punkers delivers medium paced hardcore with lotsa metal tinge in their guitar delivery, lyrics that alternate between serious and taking the piss, and a general sense of smartassery that'll add a bit of pep to your next bowl session. Was particularly amused by their basing a tune around the old Chicano joke, "Do you know Chata? Chata fuck up!" -Jimmy Alvarado (Destiny)

#### SCIENCE MAN: *Demo: CS*

With a touch of hardcore, a hint of garage rock, and a healthy dose of no wave weirdness, Science Man is an

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epic experiment that will have you cackling with glee. A one-man recorded project of musical mad scientist John Toohill, the unusual amalgam of influences worked so well you'd think Mark Mothersbaugh (Devo), John Brannon (Negative Approach), and the character Doc Brown from *Back to the Future* were collaborators. While the first five tracks amp you up and get you rocking out, the closing track "Airport Undergrounded," is a three-minute excursion of instrumental and electronica that slowly builds to an epic crescendo, then fades to a steady hum. You'll be laughing maniacally as you rewind the tape to play this again and again. —Paul J. Comeau (More Power)

#### SCIENTISTS, THE: *E.P.:7*

Albums capturing The Scientists' long legacy beginning with the origins of Australian punk have finally been trickling out over the past few years in the form of several comps and album re-issues. The band's sound changed over their long discography. While the band more or less pulled off their various phases, their early punk singles and first LP are much beloved and are now becoming easier to track down. The second single is an ultra-punk-classic out of people's hands for too long. Numero has re-released the four-song 7" including the catchy, power pop-tinged, "Last Night": a blueprint for the raw end of power pop where rock distortion and snotty vocals are honed into harmonies and then back out of control. "Pissed on Another

Planet" shows more of the controlled chaos making classics out of the songs on this essential four-song EP. —Billups Allen (Numero)

#### SCUMPUTER / L.O.T.I.O.N.:

##### *Campaign for Digital Destruction: LP*

L.O.T.I.O.N.: Dissonant, sludgy punk heavily reliant on synthesizers. Scumputer: Gabba from Chaos U.K. gets his digital hardcore groove on. —Jimmy Alvarado (540)

#### SEPTIK ONSLAUGHT:

##### *Double Homicide: CD*

Two of the band's albums—*Twitch of the Death Nerve* and *Fodder for the Apocalypse*—collected on one CD for your convenience. Sound is straight up speed metal (sorry, this here grumpy old fucker doesn't use the term "thrash metal" 'cause the first word [along with "mosh," which derived from the Bad Brains' fake Jamaican-accented pronunciation of the word "mash" and was not the name of the dance to which it is now applied, but I digress] was co-opted from punks and dumbfuck historians now have no recollection of that fact) circa 1986, with a lot of Slayer and a shit-ton of Sodom in the mix. Beats are fast 'n' frenzied, guitars a-chuggin' hard and, with song titles like "Whore of God," "Family Annihilator" and "Swear on Satan," I'm betting their e-vile bent is not without a tongue planted firmly in cheek. —Jimmy Alvarado (Ukulele Horror)

#### SICK OF IT ALL:

##### *Wake the Sleeping Dragon!: CD/LP*

I haven't listened to Sick Of It All (SOIA) in close to twenty years. I know they've paid their dues through and through, so major props to them. But I can't say how they've improved or how they're different. Instead, I come to them as a total outsider with only other acts to compare them to. When I listened to them I was reminded of another band from back in the '90s: Southern California hardcore band Strife. A lot of this reminder is from SOIA's vocalist, Lou Koller. His voice reminds me of Rick Rodney's. Strife had more of a metal tinge to them while SOIA keeps a punk beat to their songs. But both have a lot of gang vocals and can speed ahead with a furious galloping tempo. I'm also reminded of another 1990s hardcore band, Stretch Arm Strong: fast tempo, gang vocals, and some catchy singalongs. I went back and listened to some old SOIA and it seems they've been pretty consistent over the years, so if you've liked them in the past or dug '90s sing-along hardcore, then here you go. —Kurt Morris (Fat)

#### SICK THOUGHTS: Self-titled: LP

Sick Thoughts is a one-man project that doesn't sound like a one-man project, it sounds like a four-man project where all four guys are amazingly locked in to what the other three guys are doing. I suspect cloning. *Gene splicer! GENE SPLICER!* In any event, there isn't much not to like here. There's frantic rat-a-tat-tat drumming on the bottom,

fuzzy guitar blasts in the middle, and slapback vocals over the top. If you told me this was the new project from that crew from Denton, I'd believe you except for maybe how the vocals are recorded. If you told me it was the Zero Boys, I might believe you except for the cymbal rhythms. If you told me it was the Consumers, I'd probably tell you all their friends are dead, so how the hell would you know? If you told me this was the Germs after Darby croaked and they got some kid from New Orleans on vocals, I might even bite on that. Despite not having any true standout tracks, this record is executed flawlessly. I'm imagining that if you don't buy it, the guy on the cover with the chainsaw will come execute you flawlessly as well. I can't believe I just said that without being paid to do so. **BEST SONG:** "x." **BEST SONG TITLE:** None, they're all pretty corny. **FANTASTIC AMAZING TRIVIA FACT:** x. —Rev. Nørb (Goner)


#### SLINKY X: *DARN.: CS*

Slinky X is from my hometown of Buffalo, and they very much have the feel of a band that comes from a place with bars open till 4AM. The dual male-female vocals and seemingly light pop songs showcased here have a slight, edgy seediness to them, distinguishing Slinky X from most of their indie rock peers. Some of the guitar lines get a bit too jam-infused for my taste, but this is a strong release overall, easily recommendable to fans of The Thermals. —Art Ettinger (Drug Party)

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**SLUGS: Human Warmth: CS**

Ingeniously dumb-sounding Swedish garage rock with a caveman swing to it. Sorta sounds like The Spits covering The Cramps from memory. It takes talent to make something this simple. —Chris Terry (Self-released)

**SMOKERS: Falling Backwards: EP 7"**

Smokers seamlessly combines power pop and dark punk. It's pretty fantastic, and I'm into it. They're catchy but not obnoxiously so. The power pop guitar riffs/melodies are plentiful but not overdone, and the underlying deep, almost post-punk bass keeps things tethered to the ground. I believe this is the first release on vinyl from this Bay Area band, even though they've been a local punks stalwarts for awhile. I'm so happy to get my grubby little fingers on it. —Camylle Reynolds (Mouth Magazine)

**SO WHAT: "Deep Freeze" b/w "Razor Blade": 7"**

So What thrive in the glam room of the neo-proto-punk labyrinth. Their first album was loaded with slamming, upbeat glam. This single continues the trend with two stompers. "Deep Freeze" has loads of rock'n'roll riffs played loud and shaped into an arena-sized chorus. It's a slammer if you're into Glamstains or think Kiss has a few really good songs. "Razor Blades" has a similar speed with a descending riff framing the chorus. You'll want to keep up with So What if the *Killed by Glam* series or Giuda is your thing. If

you happen to see the band live, it'd be fun to learn the words so you can attempt a big, stadium-sized singalong. It would make the band feel good. —Billups Allen (Just Add Water)

**SOCIAL EXPERIMENT:****Rumours of Our Demise Are Not Greatly Exaggerated: LP/CD**

Hailing from South Wales, Social Experiment has exploded onto the U.K. punk/hardcore scene with a debut album that has left me somewhat awestruck. The album opens with "Unlock the Cage," featuring a slow and sharp post-punk intro that lulls the listener into a false sense of security before it's suddenly a case of all guns blazing. From that moment on, the album keeps firing on all cylinders, maintaining a blistering attack featuring dual vocals and a really tight delivery, best epitomized by the track "Bloody Traditions," which rips into the hideous "sport" of fox hunting. I could give this album many compliments, but keeping it brief I'll highlight the excellent song writing/structure plus the spot-on production, provided by former Dub War guitarist Jeff Rose. Those things help make this a standout record. —Rich Cocksedge (Blind Destruction)

**SOME GIFTS: Facts?!?: CD**

You know I don't play indie rock so much these days. I had more of an ear for it in my twenties when I had problems that seemed really big and devastating but really weren't problems at all. But for those moments in my youth when I pined for a girl or felt like a nobody,

I was far more likely to spin some Archers Of Loaf or whatever between two hardcore or punk CDs. Something angst and frustrated, but not exactly screaming and aggressive. Something that might be fitting for a long, pointless drive smoking clove cigarettes and moping (yes, I did), because I had all the time in the world to just drive around. The weird time signatures and melodies would be more soothing and comforting than shouting and riff, riff, riff. Now that I'm old and everything sucks, I find little time for indie rock. Just give it to me short, fast and loud. However, I've made a lot of time for Some Gifts. It meets all the criteria I liked in my youth: not too boring, too clean, or soft. No overly affected vocals or smarm. Hell, thinking back on indie rock, some of what I did listen to now seems hellia trite. Really, how can a grown-ass man, listen to Archers Of Loaf, nodding knowingly along to lyrics like, "she's an indie rocker/ and nothing's gonna stop her/ and the fashion fits" without feeling shameful? Well, Some Gifts tackles real subjects: the alienation of the information age, frustration at the workplace, apathy, et cetera. It's a perfect listen for the end of the day, when hardcore is a bit much. This record has been getting pretty heavy rotation from me. —Craven Rock (Self-released)

**SOMERSET THROWER: Godspeed: LP**

Loud guitar alternative rock indebted to the '90s, Foo Fighters, and more recent Bob Mould. They do it well,

with a crunchy production that captures both pummel and pop, and songs that are well crafted. —Jimmy Alvarado (Dead Broke)

**SORE POINTS: Self-titled: LP**

Spot-on, kickass mid-tempo punk-core. Sounds like Smogtown ODing on Undead, with a smidge of post-Ed Toxic Reasons thrown in for some extra rush. Straight-ahead, no frills, catchy, and tasty as fuck. —Jimmy Alvarado (Deranged)

**SPAZZ: Crush Kill Destroy: CD**

Looks like Tankcrimes saw fit to reissue the final LP from this legendary Bay Area outfit. I have not spent a lot of time with the record in the past so I cannot speak to sound quality or whether this has been remastered. Spazz were never a band that was big for me on recordings but they put on one of the very best live shows I have ever seen. Summer of 1997, on the ill-fated tour that was supposed to have been with Charles Bronson, I saw the band absolutely destroy in Reno, Nev. This ripping stuff is made for the live setting, though they are absolutely original and have been incredibly influential in the past two decades. It is highly unlikely that anyone reading this mag is unfamiliar with the band, but in case you never got the last record, here it is. —Mike Frame (Tankcrimes)

**SPAZZ: Dwarf Jester Rising: CD**

When I was just a wee lad and cutting my teeth on music or what



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I thought was what I should be listening to (hair metal bands; gross I know) I used to force myself to like everything those artist would release, believing that it was my duty as a loyal fan. While my interest in hair metal was short lived my love affair with Spazz is undying, but that doesn't mean I don't have my biases about the band. I've often compared them to and felt similarly about Black Sabbath, another all-time favorite of mine: the Ozzy years are superior but even without Ozzy it's still Sabbath and it still rules, right? Sort of. When I first heard this album, a great deal of the songs were already familiar to me as they have appeared on a few different Spazz releases as well as the first collection disc *Sweatin' to the Oldies*. The fact that my introduction to Spazz was their second album, *La Revancha*—which I and many others consider to be their best work may—have further spoiled their earlier efforts for me. When I finally got to hear this album it was on a reissue CD that 625 released in 2001 that also quickly went out of print. But by then the feelings had set in and it just didn't blow me away like their other readily available releases did. I can still appreciate this album on a visceral level and, in reality, it is a great powerviolence record that I wish I could feel differently about. Sadly, to me it will always be a *Heaven and Hell* to a *Master of Reality* in comparison. —Juan Espinosa (Tankcrimes)

#### SPAZZ: *La Revancha*: CD

*La Revancha* was originally released in 1997 on Sound Pollution, but fell out of print, which I find amazing considering how much Spazz is looked up to in the powerviolence scene. Granted, that's not a huge scene, but I still thought it would've stayed in print. And yet here we are. There's nothing different about this version that I can tell, although I'm also not much of a Spazz fan. I have nothing against the band, but they just never did a lot for me. This is primarily because when there are three vocalists, there's bound to be one I'm not going to like. And while I don't know who screams what, one of the vocalists is just the stereotypical Cookie Monster vocals. At the time it probably wasn't so weird, but in hindsight it seems passé. Perhaps this is one of those things that is due to twenty years of distance, but the corny aspects—putting in a banjo or saxophone and clips from movies—don't age well. They take away from what could be a pretty powerful album. That said, there's some great music on here and I can see why so many bands draw inspiration from Spazz. "Swampfoot" has a sweet groove going toward the end. And despite the saxophone, the guitar on "Sweet Home Alabama" is tight. That's the kind of stuff I want to hear more of. I suppose fans of Spazz already have this and for those who want to know their powerviolence history, you should get this. I'm just not quite there, though. —Kurt Morris (Tankcrimes)

#### SRIRACHA-CHAS, THE: *Treason*: CDEP

Six tracks of smart, angry, mid-tempo punk rock. They largely keep things straightforward, but there are nice hints of mid-'80s D.C. influences that pop when they let themselves stretch out a little. Considering I was expecting pop punk for some odd reason, this was a pleasant surprise. —Jimmy Alvarado (Girth)

#### STELLA: *Career Suicide*: LP

Big Crux on hella acid, where time bends and melodies bleed. I looked up these Midwest punks out of Cincinnati and Columbus and they are straight-up weirdos. Best noise I've heard all year. Highly recommended. —Camillye Reynolds (Self-released)

#### STIGMATISM: *Self-titled*: 7" EP

These cats have the early NYHC sound dialed the fuck in. Ton of tunes packed in here: short, fast, pissed, and devoid of the metal influence that fucked up the sound mere years after its glory days. —Jimmy Alvarado (Beach Impediment)

#### STONEFIELD: *Far From Earth*: LP

I always feel conflicted when talking about all-female bands because on one hand, I want us all to evolve past mentioning the gender of talented female musicians, as though it were surprising or anomalous that a woman could make good music, and just accept that female musicians are "regular" musicians; on the other hand, I can't help but feel particularly

excited when a truly badass group of women come together and make heavy music. Stonefield's four sisters from Melbourne, Australia, musically rival any of today's best psychedelic rock bands (including Flightless label mates King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard) with their own unique stamp—not the least of which is singing drummer Amy Findlay's wailing vocals that powerfully echo through deep space. I saw them open for Frankie And The Witch Fingers in L.A. recently, and their energy seemed to reverberate right through everyone's chests, through the walls. Two full-length albums in, Stonefield has rightfully staked its claim as a star student of the '70s, and I can't wait to see where they go from here. —Michelle Kirk (Flightless)

#### STOOLS, THE: *Milk River Blues*: CS

What a buncha weirdos from Detroit. Love it. Three grimy, coarse, and ramshackle songs that barely top five minutes total. There's Dead Kennedys-style hysteria that gives that sense of somehow giving a shit without caring a tiny bit. —Theresa W. (What's For Breakfast?)

#### STRANGE PLANES: *South of Okay*: LP/CD

Now and again, a pleasant surprise drops through my letterbox and this is one of them. Not a band I'd heard of at all previously but I'm pleased that someone took the time to send me a copy. Within just a handful of plays a good number of the tracks

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were settling down nicely in my head, with catchy riffs and refrains coming to the fore regularly. It's well played indie punk that has melodies aplenty and intermittent moments of power. It took me a while to figure out who it reminded me of, but out of nowhere it hit me one morning: Woahnows, which makes sense as I like that band. —Rich Cocksedge (Bad Horror)

#### SUBSONICS:

##### *He's a Keeper of the Fire: 7"*

Veteran weirdo garage rockers Subsonics follow up their recent album with a 7" of obscure covers, sure to satisfy and confound know-it-all collector geeks the world 'round. This bears many repeat listens! —Chad Williams (Hidden Volume)

#### SUPER UNISON: *Stella*: CD/LP

*Stella* is Super Unison's follow-up to their strong debut, *Auto*. That album struck hard, sounding like a cross between vocalist Meghan O'Neil's former band, Punch, and the band from which Super Unison takes their name, Drive Like Jehu. *Stella* shows a big leap forward for this Bay Area three-piece. There are still remnants of that former sound, especially with O'Neil's screams coming through on many occasions. They give the music an intensity that contrasts well with the post-punk sound. However, compared to their debut, the new material bears a resemblance to Unwound and Dischord Records bands (especially Hoover). The ten songs were recorded by Steve

Albini and produced by Don Devore (The Icarus Line, Ink & Dagger), so you can believe the sound is crisp and strong. The album clocks in at around thirty minutes and provides a perfect mix of intensity, anger, and brooding. Definitely in the top five of the year for me. —Kurt Morris (Deathwish)

#### SURHOFF: *Separate Places*: CS

Sloppy punk in the vein of the glut of '90s artists that blurred the lines between indie rock and the various other slacker genres. It's a perfect tape for those afternoons cooking at a friend's house. The guitars, played at half mast, drip with the sweat from a lazy summer sun. Maybe it's wishful thinking, but I hear Archers Of Loaf, Superchunk, the melodic side of the Dischord catalog, and a little bit of the Latterman family tree, all stirred into the melting pot. Recommended. —Gwen Static (Self-released)

#### SWEATSHOP BOYS: *Two Men*: LP

I'm not sure how many, if any, bands reviewed in this fine publication have had their vocalist compared to Billy Joel, but this could be the first. A number of tracks sound as if the world-renowned singer popped in when *Two Men* was being recorded to add his input to proceedings. Given that there are more than a few heavy nods towards a rock'n'roll style sound within Sweatshop Boys' predominantly power pop-tinged-with-punk approach, the vocals fit in well, whoever delivers them. I wasn't aware this band was still

going so to receive this and discover that it was an album worthy of many spins was a joyous moment. —Rich Cocksedge (Rockstar)

#### TELEPHONE LOVERS: *"Two Dollar Baby" b/w "Real Action": 7"*

Put on your bell bottoms, roller skates, load up all your friends into your VW bus, and head on down to the roller rink where the Telephone Lovers will whisk away all your troubles to the traditional rock'n'roll sounds previously perfected by the New York Dolls and The Exploding Hearts. Then step outside the rink into reality where the Telephone Lovers are essentially rehashing a tired and played-out style of power pop while bringing nothing new to the table. Forgettable, dull, and predictable. —Juan Espinosa (Disconnected / Burger)

#### TEN HIGH: *Slackjaw Gaze: 7"*

Sludgy, swampy rock/punk built around finding a groove and riding it for all it's worth. —Jimmy Alvarado (What's For Breakfast)

#### TERRORNAUTS, THE: *Self-titled*: CD

Judging by the name and the Rat Fink art on the cover, I was expecting a genre with the word "Billy" attached to it. What I got was some straightforward punk rock that could win over any dive bar crowd. No wanna-be Misfits or standup bass here, just good raspy punk rock without effects, frills, bells, or whistles. —Ryan Nichols (Tuna Forsushi)

#### TOMMY AND THE COMMIES:

##### *Here Come*: LP

Tommy And The Commies came out of nowhere just to give me my favorite album of 2018. Think late '70s and early '80s punk/new wave, and also those early '00s bands that paid sonic homage to said eras (Exploding Hearts, Girls—the ones on Dirtnap, not one of the zillion other Girls.) Heavy Buzzcocks feel, in the best way (RIP to The Buzzcocks' Pete Shelley, who passed away in between drafts of this here review.) The songs are all so good they repeat on side two! It's hard to pick just one for a mix, but if pressed, I'd say "Sucking in Your 20s." Take that, kids of today! Partners well with driving rock'n'roll punk like Marked Men, Carbonas, and Biznaga. —Sal Lucci (Slovenly)

#### TRINIDAD, LA: *Las Venas: 7"*

Two tracks from this Spanish punk act, originally appearing on their *El Peligro* EP. Both tracks draw evenly from '60s pop and whatever high-octane punk well the Dirtnap stable of bands bathe in—tight, taut, catchy, and flawless. —Jimmy Alvarado (Spazz)

#### TWENTY ONE GUN SALUTE:

##### *Violence of Action*: LP

San Gabriel oi band lays down eleven tunes concerned with the usual oi subjects—working class issues, pride, camaraderie, patriotism, violence-as-resolution, and so on—along with a maternal-themed ode and another about catching someone fucking your

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wife in your bed. Tunes are zippy, tight, and well executed. —Jimmy Alvarado (Crowd Control Media)

**ULTRA RAZZIA: Self-titled: LP**

Tough and tuneful four-chord Québécois oi with lyrics about booze, depression, and jail. I'm hearing some Blitz and Rixe, and enough scrappy personality to set them apart from the pack. If "Les Imcompris" inspired my four-year-old to throw a toy saxophone across the room, imagine what it'll do next time you're knocking back a few beers. Thoroughly kick ass. —Chris Terry (Foreign Legion)

**UNRULY BOYS: Self-titled: 7"**

Oi-inspired hardcore punk that isn't afraid to play a little faster than most bands doing this style. It's not overwhelmingly impressive or original but at least the lyrics reveal that these dudes aren't down with nationalism or fence walking. A proud boy is a Nazi and they can both fuck off. —Juan Espinosa (Crowd Control Media / Border City)

**VANILLA POPPERS:  
I Like Your Band: 7" EP**

Vanilla Poppers waste no time. With the subtly named opener "Get Away from Me," they kick down the door and yell the lyrics "You're so boring / You're so fake / You think you're so good / I don't care what you have to say." Like Taz the Tasmanian Devil, they barrel in, leave a path of destruction, and disappear in the blink

of an eye. Is it juvenile? Yup (hell, there's even a song named "I'm an Adult Baby"). Is it urgent? Double yup. Is it boring? Fuck no. —Sean Arenas (Feel It / Drunken Sailor)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS:**

**American Oi! Texas Edition: LP**

Crowd Control Media is one of my favorite labels, as you can consistently count on them to release the best oi and streetpunk groups that they can get their hands on. This six-way split includes a few songs each from six current Texas oi bands, each of which is a ton of fun. Thug Boots, Drastic Actions, The Booked, Dog Company, Smärt Boyz, and No Resistance all display influences from both European oi and U.S. hardcore, which is common for stateside oi. There's no cringe-worthy jingoism on display, just good-natured, anti-authority tracks to sing along to. This comp is strongly recommended, as is the rest of the Crowd Control Media catalog. —Art Ettinger (Crowd Control Media)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS:**

**Destroy All Art Vol. 2: LP**

I'm glad to see the *Destroy All Art* comp series continue. Volume 1 had me questioning how we could be at a stage when we're comping the '90s, but when you really think about it, *Killed By Death* comped the '80s in the '80s, so we're overdue for mining the fertile '90s. Cheaper recording technology grew in the '90s and you

could trip over all the small label releases at your local record store. We were still a few years from the "record your band that will only be around for two weeks" glut of the '00s, and yes there were a lot of one-off bands in the '90s, for better or for worse. So, kudos to Rock N' Roll Parasite for slogging away! I'm surprised I haven't at least heard anything on either volume so far (Spin Age Blasters is the only name I recognize, and I only recently heard of them). My favorite songs happen to fall in a row, the two that close out side one (Seculars' "Social Skills" and Spin Age Blasters' "In Your Daddy's Car") and open side two (The Ignatz "Neutral Eyes." Get it?) I could see myself putting The Babysitters Club's "Surfing Queen" on a mix too. If I must complain about something (and I always do) it is this: Splayed Innards' "Social Retard" should have been left off. The song is from 1996 and things were different back then (not for the better) but the R-word has always been a bad word, people. —Sal Lucci (Rock N' Roll Parasite)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: Killed by Meth #3:  
Rust Belt Rockers: LP**

It's Trash! continues its legacy of spreading the word with a third volume of its killer comp series, featuring a healthy mix of well-known and overlooked bands from the Rust Belt of North America. Having lived exclusively in the Rust Belt for my entire life, I've been privy to countless

classic acts that would have been huge if they hailed from either coast. These comps attempt to rectify the inherent obscurity that accompanies Rust Belt musicianship. This edition features tracks from relatively known bands like S.L.I.P. and Obnox, as well as less-appreciated groups like Mr. Clit And The Pink Cigarettes. Like the first two volumes, it's an absolute must. —Art Ettinger (It's Trash!)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS: LEVO (10 Ace  
Bands from the Lucky Country): LP**

This is a cool little collection of lesser-known psych bands from Australia, with a (thankfully) broad definition of psych. Some of the best work centers around a kind of Paisley Underground influence, but there are also outre post-punk sounds and German experimental references, conventional OCS-esque moments and shoegaze pop, minimalist punk, and "swamp tango" and "war with the future." There are no low points. Wild Meadows' "These Days" stands out to me—melancholy paisley pop that feels effortless and classic. I imagine everyone who listens might have a different favorite. It's that kind of record. —Matt Werts (Mpls Ltd)

**VARIOUS ARTISTS:**

**This Is POP! Canada: LP**

For those unaware, This Is POP Records from Edmonton, Alberta is on the cusp of blowing up. Spearheaded by Real Sickies (and ex-Let's Dance) frontman Ben Disaster, the mission is simple: spread the gospel of



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Canada punk and smash everything in its path. *This Is POP! Canada* is a merely entrance sampling of that. A solid from start-to-finish compilation of current Canadian bands crushing the scene: Outtacontroller, First Base, Pale Lips, Average Times, Real Sickies, Cheap Whine, Future Girls, and Corner Boys, just to scratch the surface. And, really, while all fourteen tracks on this are perfect, it really does just barely scratch the surface, which is the point. The Country is exploding with great bands, and this slab is a perfect representation of them, from East to West. —Steve Adamyk (This Is POP)

#### VARIOUS ARTISTS:

##### Tuna Forsushi Presents:

##### Live Your Gimmick Volume 1: CD

As much as I like the “gimmick” of a professional wrestling manager putting out a punk CD, three quarters of the bands on this four-way split don’t do it for me. Most of them are pretty amateur hour, like dRIVIN BEATS who split up their time singing songs about beach girls with songs about vampire girls. Or worse, The Downstrokes who are far too old to focus their songwriting skill on complaining about New York girls and punk rock Lolitas. I’ll say it, a good indicator of the quality of an album is how few song titles end in “girl” or “girls” (“Lolita” counts). Sourpuss fails to bring the rock with their ham-fisted attempts at transgressive lyrics. These bands sound like bands that

would open for Sloppy Seconds when I was a teenager living in Indianapolis, bands that didn’t get that Sloppy Seconds weren’t actually dumb, they were anti-intellectual and when it came to being stupid, they were actually pretty smart about it. The Xiles, however, I really dug. Their sound worships The Damned, The Joykiller, and T.S.O.L. It’s spooky, earnest punk and the singer has some pipes on him. They alone make the CD worth holding on to. I was also into pro wrestling’s Tuna Forsushi announcing each band on the CD. I’d be interested in hearing volume two, hoping he could raise the bar a bit. —Craven Rock (Tuna Forsushi)

##### VOICE OF DOOM: Toxic Swamp: 7"

A horror punk band from New Jersey pens a couple catchy little ditties that any fan of their home state’s horror punk history should enjoy. —Chad Williams (Pyrrhic Victory)

##### WITCH FEVER:

##### "Toothless" b/w "Daddy Pt.2": 7"

Witch Fever came to my attention via photos on social media of the band playing live—and almost every one, it just looked like a great band to watch. When I finally got to hear them, it cemented my positive thoughts towards the quartet. This single offers up a double dose of punk/grunge which, although tuneful and well recorded, barely masks the underlining rage that constantly bubbles under the surface of the tracks. I really want to

see this band live, as I imagine that would be the best way to experience its incendiary presence. As an added “fun” fact, all four members have forenames which start with the letter “A.” —Rich Cocksedge (Brassneck)

##### WOOD CHICKENS: Mall Cop: 7"

This Midwestern band is back with a couple tunes that would probably make Mojo Nixon proud. I remember them having a bit of a cowpunk feel and that is still the case with this latest release. It’s mastered by the great Justin Perkins, so the sound quality is top notch. If you are a fan of anything that was ever called cowpunk or the majority of the Crypt Records catalog, this band will have a lot to offer you. —Mike Frame (Head Above Water)

##### WURM: Exhumed: 2 x LP

I had a great time listening to the *You Don’t Know Mojack* podcast, wherein Ryan and Brant chronologically discuss SST Records’ entire catalogue each week. It’s an ambitious project—especially when considering the sprawling swath of releases the label geysered after Black Flag broke up. The early stuff, that said, has been fascinating to learn about. Recent installments have featured Wurm, Chuck Dukowski’s pre-Flag outfit. I’d never spent any time with them prior to this deluxe reissue arriving at my door. *Exhumed* compiles the *Feast* LP, the *I’m Dead* EP, and early

demos. It’s fascinating listening, especially when considering how metal it all sounds: the riffs hear are heavy and thudding, but the vocals ululate with the theatricality that became codified into signifier. Another Record Store Day reissue, this one limited to 1,100 copies, so, as Fugazi says, keep your eyes open. —Michael T. Fournier (Org.)

##### ZERO GAIN: Modern Blues, The First Five Years: CD

Poppy French punk with an indie rock undertow that makes things even more interesting. The lack of polish in the production benefits things greatly, giving it a raw sheen that adds more punch. —Jimmy Alvarado (Nineteen Something)

##### ZETA: Magia Infinita: LP

Intermittently chaotic and atmospheric, intense and epic, Zeta covers a lot of musically emotional ground on this six-song EP. I’ve seen this Venezuelan group described as post-rock, but have no frame of reference for that style. Russian Circles is the only band on my radar that I can even remotely reference for what Zeta sounds like, albeit with vocals. Regardless, this record has a magnetic quality to it that anyone into heavy music of any sort could appreciate. —Chad Williams (IFB)



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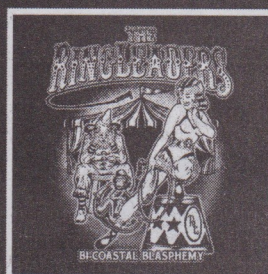
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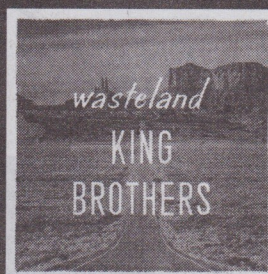
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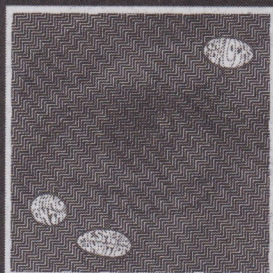
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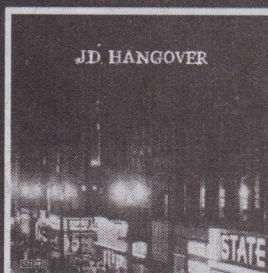
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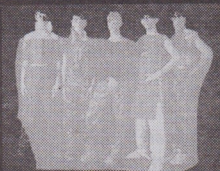
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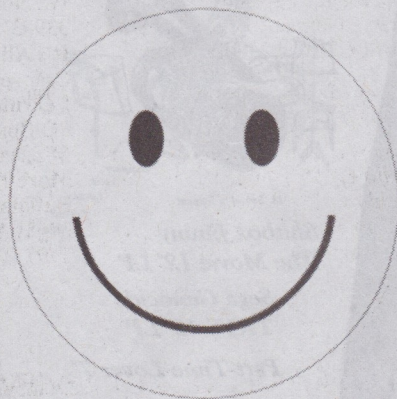
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to bands and labels that were reviewed either in this issue  
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Austin, TX 78757  
**1332**, PO Box 16626,  
Boise, ID 83715  
**Alien Snatch**,  
Rodenbergstraße 31,  
10439 Berlin, Germany  
**Andy Smith**, 701 Turrentine  
St., Gadsden, AL 35901  
**Arkam**, 1925 Hwy 69 S.,  
Savannah, TN 38372  
**Bakkara** c/o Matt, PO Box  
85, Portland, ME 04112  
**Bcore**, Montmany 25,  
08012 Barcelona, Spain  
**Beach Impediment**,  
PO Box 26348,  
Richmond, VA 23260  
**Burger**, 645 S. State  
College Ave. #A,  
Fullerton, CA 92831  
**Certified P.R.**,  
6364 Third Ave. South, St.  
Petersburg, FL 33707  
**CMGR**, PO Box 72031,  
Oakland, CA 94612  
**Contra**, Lüptitzer Strasse  
39 / Gebäude 28, 04808  
Wurzen, Germany  
**Crowd Control Media**, 990  
Hwy 287 N. Ste. 106 PMB  
#239, Mansfield, TX 76063  
**Crypt**, Julius-Leber-Str.20,  
22765 Hamburg, Germany  
**Daptone**, 115 Troutman,  
Brooklyn, NY 11206  
**Dead Broke**, 139 Huber  
Ave., Holbrook, NY 11471

**Deranged** c/o Gordon  
Dufresne, 2700 Lower Rd.,  
Roberts Creek, BC V0N  
2W4, Canada  
**Dirt Cult**,  
7930 NE Prescott St.,  
Portland, OR 97218  
**Dirtnap**,  
PO Box 7533,  
Madison, WI 53707  
**Fat Wreck Chords**,  
2196 Palou Ave San  
Francisco, CA 94124  
**Feel It**, PO Box 25045,  
Richmond, VA 23260  
**Flightless**,  
253 Lygon St., Brunswick  
East, VIC 3057, Australia  
**Freaks** c/o Max Nordile,  
1336 Fitzgerald St.,  
Oakland, CA 94608  
**Girth**,  
PO Box 13,  
Geneva, NY 14456  
**Goner**,  
2152 Young Ave.,  
Memphis, TN 38104  
**IFB**, 4447 St. Clair Ave.  
W., North Ft. Myers, FL  
33903-5836  
**It's Alive**, 11411 Hewes St.,  
Orange, CA 92869  
**Learning Curve**,  
PO Box 18378,  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
**More Power**, PO Box 467,  
Buffalo, NY 14226  
**Night Animal**, PO Box  
7997, Tempe, AZ 85281

**No Front Teeth**,  
PO Box 27070, London,  
N2 9ZP, England  
**Numero**, 2533-35 South  
Troy, Chicago, IL 60623  
**Outro**,  
9800 D Topanga Canyon  
Blvd. #299, Chatsworth, CA  
91311  
**Participle**,  
3201 Landover St., #1001,  
Alexandria, VA 22305  
**Phratry**,  
PO Box 14267,  
Cincinnati, OH 45250  
**Pirates Press**, 1260 Powell  
St., Emeryville, CA 94608  
**Pyrrhic Victory**, PO Box  
412, Lyndhurst, NJ 07071  
**Rad Girlfriend**,  
2311 Munger Pointe Dr.,  
Dayton, OH 45459  
**Recess**, PO Box 1666, San  
Pedro, CA 90733  
**Rerun**, PO Box 22472, St.  
Louis, MO 63126-0472  
**River Monster**, PO Box 39,  
Dalzell, SC 29040  
**Rock N' Roll Parasite**,  
8501 Brimhall Rd., Unit  
404, Bakersfield, CA 93312  
**Saustex**,  
PO BOX 691356 San  
Antonio, TX 78269-1356  
**Slope**, 11430 N. Cave Creek  
Rd., Sunnyslope, AZ 85020  
**Smoking Cat**, 17358  
Wilshire Dr., South Bend,  
IN 46635

**Snappy Little Numbers**,  
PO Box 370602,  
Denver, CO 80237  
**Soundflat** c/o Marco Traxel,  
Alteburger Str. 273, 50968  
Cologne, Germany  
**Spazz**, PO Box 52038, 3007  
Rotterdam, The Netherlands  
**Specialist Subject**, 72-73  
Old Market St., Bristol BS2  
0EJ, United Kingdom  
**Stardumb**, PO Box 21145,  
3001 AC Rotterdam,  
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**Swamp Cabbage**, 1431  
Michigan Ave. Apt A,  
Winter Park, FL 32789  
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**Tankcrimes**, PO Box 3495,  
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**The Strands LA**,  
2222 N Beachwood Dr.,  
LA, CA 90068  
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1840 N. Kilpatrick St.,  
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**Vinyl Conflict**, 324 S Pine  
St., Richmond, VA 23220  
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• We will not review download cards or a link to an album.

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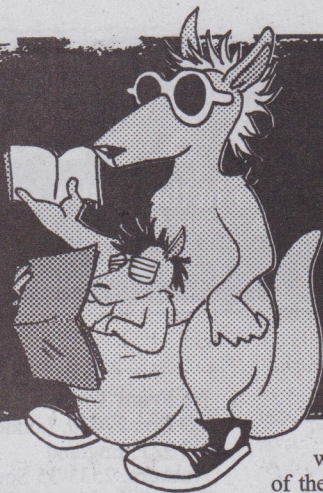
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The amount of opposition  
you face when you attack  
the police, even from an  
intellectual standpoint, is  
stunning.

—Jimmy Cooper  
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

## BEETROOT,

\$5, 5¼" x 8", risograph printed, 40 pgs.

In vibrant pink and forest green, this risograph printed beetroot cooking zine really is beautifully designed and informative! Including recipes on cooking beetroot in a slaw, borscht, curry, or making them as pierogies, the recipes sound hearty and filling (an especially good thing now that the weather is colder). There are instructions on how to preserve and pickle beets, and a nice afterword explaining how cooking has helped the author through bouts of depression. Further reading of healthy cookbooks is included in the back. —Tricia Ramos (Beetroot, etsy.com/uk/shop/tfthth)

## DITHERING DOODLES #57, #63-#65,

trade, 5½" x 8½", copied, 24 pgs.

*Dithering Doodles* strikes back with a whopping fourteen issues. Mercifully, they've only asked us to review four of them. Once again, they are mostly a freeform collection of stream of consciousness thoughts, random doodles, and the occasional rant. The comics aim for the medium of high energy and low polish, what I imagine zine fests are full of. These are clearly the work of an artist in great need of an outlet, willing to put forth whatever comes to mind, like a Guided By Voices album. As a product (and fuck me for talking about products in a punk zine), they leave a little to be desired. They are a personal to a degree where outside input seems completely irrelevant. Come for the doodles, stay for the dithering. —Gwen Static (Steve "Dith Dood" Anderson, premiumdeluxe@hotmail.com)

## ENCYCLOPEDIA OF DEADLY PLANTS,

\$?, 4¼" x 5½", Risograph, 8 pgs.

The dangers of the common vegetable are taken with a grain of salt, but the author of this zine (a Dr. Park) take it very seriously. The dangers of veggies like broccoli, celery, and artichokes will no longer be at the back of my head. My favorite addition is when Spinach Artichoke dip is called the "world's deadliest appetizer." I ate a whole bag of roasted broccolis from Trader Joes about an hour ago, so I won't see the publication of this zine. Tell my spouse I hate them. —Iggy Nicklbottum (Yiran Park, instagram.com/yiranpark)

## ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: A 150 YEAR PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE MINNEAPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT,

free PDF, 8½" x 11", glossy, copied, 36 pgs.

*Enough Is Enough*, before even being opened, is super aesthetically pleasing, well laid-out, and intriguing. Once opened, it's a little intimidating. These people have done their research and it shows. That's important, though, because the amount of opposition you face when you attack the police, even from an intellectual standpoint, is stunning. Getting into the actual content, though, *Enough Is Enough* is the exact right combination of statistic, history, and narrative required to make a compelling argument against something so ingrained in our culture. It's split into three sections: Where We've Been, Where We're At, and Where We're Going. This zine is specific to the Minneapolis Police Department, but does briefly go into the history of policing as a whole before detailing the specificities of MPD's long and fucked-up narrative. Where We're At exposes the current state of the MPD through the lens of both those who work in direct contact with them and those most disadvantaged by them on the daily. The portrait is grim but it reflects a reality many people

with privilege can't see. Where We're Going is the most hopeful of the writing—not that we should try to make this situation light—and provides concrete, realistic steps to a community and world without police, and for that, I love it. —Jimmy Cooper (mpd150.com)

## GOTH GANG: A MEMOIR #1, \$3, 4" x 2½", Laserjet, 20 pgs.

Nostalgia is the driving force behind this mini-zine. Whether you lived goth in the '80s, or are a current goth kind of missing your other goth friends in your empty, empty room, this brings that great feeling of adolescent camaraderie right to your palms. This first issue's all about discovering other goths and that scary moment when you go to that Hot Topic (circa '90s) getting your first black T-shirt. Check it out. It leaves you wanting more and there are at least two more issues I know of. —Iggy Nicklbottum (Anonymous, bought at Book Show)

## HATRED OF WRITING, \$5/\$6/\$7, 5½" x 8½", copied, 43 pgs.

*Hatred of Writing* is a collection of short stories from the past five years written by S. D. Stewart. These twenty tales are less than three or four pages each, so they're easy to get through. The stories are more cerebral and not necessarily "fun" tales. In fact, many of them detail lives of people who are unhappy with their existence: a scientist, an office worker, and an infiltrator. I could very much empathize with many of the characters, as I've often been someone who doesn't like his place in life, primarily with my jobs. I could also relate to this zine as a writer, as I wrote stories and pieces about being unhappy with my life, particularly my work. Yet, more of my writing was directly autobiographical in nature. And that's something I wish Stewart would have done here. It's easy to cloak unhappiness with life in short fiction, but I find it more encouraging to know there are other individuals dealing with my experiences, not just fictional characters. Still, it's written well and interesting, albeit on the more abstract side. —Kurt Morris (lostgander.wordpress.com/zine)

## KACKLE #14, \$7, 5" x 7", blue, red, and gray printed, 24 pgs.

*Kackle* is a 3D zine. Each issue is a different story or idea, but they all feature the familiar red and blue printing of old 3D comics or magazines and include a pair of 3D glasses. This issue (subtitled *Prom Queen Werewolf in 3D*) reads like a children's spooky story with a prom queen getting scratched by a werewolf, not noticing it at first, then changing into the beast over the big dance. The concept is cute and I think it would be a great kid's first zine. (Even though the cover of the zine has a big 18+ rating on it, it's not all that mature.) Some spelling errors and a few of the jokes are shrug-worthy, but the 3D is well executed. —Tricia Ramos (Kackle, facebook.com/kacklezine)

## LIGHT THAT NEVER GOES OUT, A, \$3, 4" x 5½", copied, 28 pgs.

Two letters from two likeminded spirits fill this zine; both experiencing and expressing anxieties, depression, and emotions. One letter is a more solemn, calm voice, questioning what it means to be alive and are we existing as ghosts? The other letter has a more frantic, high intensity feeling, with sentences running on with no end to their anxiety. Both letters are here on display, a glimpse into two people's minds and voices. —Tricia Ramos (There Is A Light That Never Goes Out, crapandemic.storenvy.com)

## MY DUMB KIDS, \$3, 3¾" x 9½", Risograph, 14 pgs.

Picked this zine up at a sketchy-looking comic shop where my sketchy-looking witchcraft store used to be. It immediately caught my attention



with its bright cover and hilarious title. I bought it, got my ass outta there, and read this hilarious comic zine on some dumb kids. It uses a style of art that mimics a coloring book crayoned in by a talented child. Not a dumb one. It follows the narrative of a man who says his kids are dumb, and his smiling contempt of the children is something that I can really get behind. Kids are dumb. Pick this up! —Iggy Nicklbottum (Sam Spina, spinadoodles.com)

**NIX QUARTERLY #10**, \$5, 8½" x 11", printed, 28 pgs.

I've now read a handful of the Nix published comics and they seem to be steadily improving. The caliber of art in this issue (special shout out to Gideon Kendall for his gorgeous contribution) is a dramatic improvement over other offerings I've seen from the same publisher. There are a few real winners in this issue, specifically the first two stories. Weirdly, I found myself bored by the cover story, a tale of fighting werewolves in a bar, but they can't all be winners. It's maybe a bit odd that the best two stories are right in the front of the book. At this rate, I have no doubt that Nix is well on their way to being a reliable source for quick, easy-to-get-into anthology comics like this. —Gwen Static (Nix Comics, nixcomics.com)

**PROOF I EXIST #29**, 5½" x 8½", copied, 20 pgs.

This issue of *Proof I Exist* zine is about obsession with hockey. He describes his initial struggle with it, not wanting to get down with hyper-

the grandmother's slow, but fun old moped, and both elder's deaths. Definitely a perzine that got me feeling emotional about my own family. —Tricia Ramos (Rum Lad, etsy.com/uk/shop/rumladzinesandart)

**SLUT CITY JOURNAL #2**,

\$2 ppd. or trade, 5½" x 8½", copied, 100 pgs.

One hundred pages of DIY from a collective in Salt Lake City, Utah. Utilizing every page, there are tutorials on pirate radio, how to broadcast your own television station, recipes for affordable meals, how to start a distro, how to make milk paste (not wheat paste), guides to utilizing thrift stores to their ultimate potential, how to become a show promoter... honestly the list goes on and on. A super useful guide for any individual interested in removing themselves from consumerism and becoming a more self-reliant human. —Tricia Ramos (Slut City Journal, SCJ c/o 900 South #326, Salt Lake City, UT 84111)

**subTERRAIN #80**, \$7, 10" x 12", printed, 96 pgs.

Keeping anything happening for thirty years is impressive. *subTerrain*—a Canadian indie lit mag—manages the feat, doubly impressive due to its dedication to publishing unheard voices. Like the many issues I've reviewed in the past, this issue is themed: it harkens back to the mag's original mission statement of publishing from the margins. Throughout this anniversary issue is fantastic fiction and poetry: this issue's standouts include abecedarian poetry by Evelyn Lau and lake

## A super useful guide for any individual interested in removing themselves from consumerism and becoming a more self-reliant human.

—Tricia Ramos | SLUT CITY JOURNAL #2

masculine jock shit and making his peace with this. He also analyzes hockey from a queer standpoint, reviews a hockey book found in an old couch, and more. The best part by far was about his teenage love of playing the game with his friends. First, they're content simply playing with inline skates and two trash cans to mark a goal, then someone suggests they compete in a state competition. Taking up the challenge they get in way over their heads playing high school teams that are far more skilled. The fallout is hilarious and kind of sweet. While it certainly didn't inspire me to reconsider hockey, people writing about stuff they like with joy and passion is always fun to read. —Craven Rock (iknowbilly@gmail.com)

**ROCK 'N' ROLL HORROR ZINE, THE #2**, 5½" x 8½", copied, 40 pgs.

This collection of horror fiction is the opposite of a band like, say, The Misfits. It's horror about rock rather than rock about horror. It's a fun, trashy read that can be on the predictable side. For example, take the story about an ancient guitar chord unleashing a Lovecraftian hell upon the world, or the one about a death metal band calling up a Lovecraftian hell upon the world, or zombie punk bands, all of which are fine for a bus ride. However, at times it gets pretty creative, take "End Times at Rock 'n' Roll Joey's," a story about a rockabilly diner serving the haggard survivors and mutants of an apocalyptic world. Most of the material is pretty light, horror fare (not Groovy Ghoulies light, but there's nothing you'll have to leave lights on after reading), however, I have to admit Ben Fitts' "Reality," with its cyberpunk take on murderous death metal, will get under your skin if you let it. —Craven Rock (doomgoat666@gmail.com, doomgoat666.wixsite.com/benfitts)

**RUM LAD #12**, £3, 6" x 8", printed, 26 pgs.

This is a zine of dedication and remembering of one zinester's grandparents. In this issue of *Rum Lad*, we learn about the author's grandparents, one of who died in 2013, and the other in 2017. Short but sweet, the zine has quick memories of events or personality quirks of these loved ones, including the grandfather's Navy tattoos,

monster fiction by Anne Baldo. At twenty-five bucks for a two-year, six-issue subscription, *subTerrain* is a steal. Always a great read, always a joy to find in the mailbox. Get it! —Michael T. Fournier (PO Box 3008 Main Post Office, Vancouver BC V6B 3X5 Canada)

**SYNDICATE PRODUCT #24**, \$3, 5½" x 8½", copied, 24 pgs.

If you've ever read a book that was so awful you couldn't help but tell your friends all about it, then this zine will be right up your alley. This multi-contributor zine features negative reviews, or "cultural criticism" of books that disappointed or infuriated their readers. Honestly it was a delight. Reading reviews that are so brutally honest about popular publications brought me a lot of joy. The really appealing part is that all of the reviews explain in detail just what was so upsetting or angering in the books. From their topics, to the pacing of the writing, there's something for everyone to hate on! Highly recommended if you're an avid reader or enjoy the negative reviews from Goodreads. —Tricia Ramos (Syndicate Product, c/o Michel PO Box 877, Lansdowne, PA 19050, synprod.etsy.com)

**WHERE HAVE ALL THE FLOWERS GONE #2**,

\$7, 5" x 7", Laserjet, 36 pgs.

A really amazing guide to the women of folk music. The very first page is a profile of Vashti Bunyan with an amazing illustration of her. This is an extremely helpful and well made guide for anyone who wants to get into folk and needs a place to start. Bijou Karman's illustrations are beautiful, and the handwriting and design go so well together. It's one of those zines you can put on your "coffee table" to show off to your friends, and everyone will want to pick it up immediately. Singers include Odetta, Judee Sill, Nico, Karen Dalton, and so many more! Yes, also Joan Baez. —Iggy Nicklbottum (Bijou Karman, bijoukarman.com)





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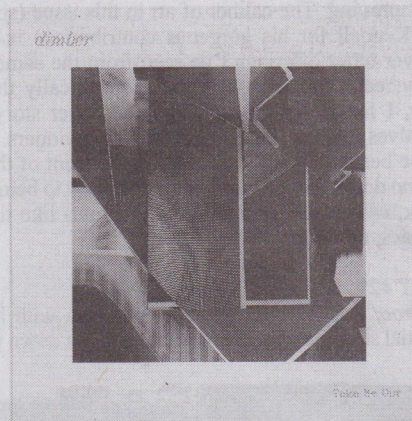
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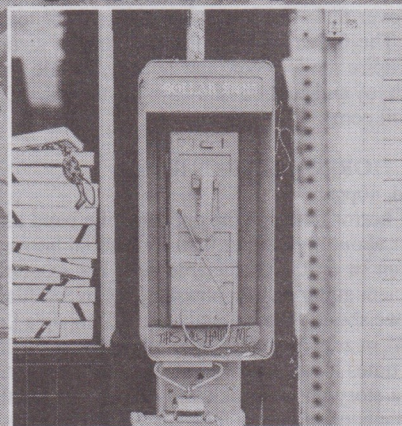
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# BOOK REVIEWS



## 131 Different Things

By Nick Zinner, Zachary Lipz, & Stacy Wakefield, 248 pgs.

I'm a sucker for books about New York City. Especially books that explore the life and times of punks or beatniks, either in the present or the past. Thus, *131 Different Things* was right up my alley. Author Zachary Lipz writes about Sam, a bartender at a dive

The book is also designed by Stacy Wakefield. These three—Wakefield, Zinner, and Lipz—are frequent collaborators. Their experience with one another shows, as they make the complete package tie together well.

On the whole, I very much enjoyed *131 Different Things*, primarily because I like books about NYC and punk and people trying to find someone or something and seeing the adventure that happens along the way. This book provided all of that. Still, I can't help but think it could've sufficed just as well if it had been tucked together as a small paperback novella. As it stands, thirty dollars seems a lot for a book that is good, but not great. —Kurt Morris (Akashic, 232 Third St., Suite A115, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

## Beauty Found in Darkness

By Kent Grosswiler, 128 pgs.

An experimental juxtaposition of haiku and illustrations. I struggle to fully grasp the presentation. You can start from either end of the book and then must flip it over in the middle. One half just seems to use the haikus once on the left page and then repeat the same one on the right page with an illustration. The other half uses a different haiku for the prose and illustrations. It's a little confused. There's also one repeat illustration, but I'll chalk that up to an error. I'm not sure if I'm qualified to review what is ultimately poetry, but there are a few zingers in there. The illustrations really steal the show, to the point where I question if including the original prose haikus really adds anything at all. I can't doubt the book's sense of graphic design, because generally speaking it's a very cohesive vision. —Gwen Static (Nix Comics, nixcomics.com)

## Black Swan Rising

By Lisa Brackmann, 421 pgs.

Think about the next big mass shooting. Think about the next time someone brings an AR-15 into a place where we could

I feel like I learned something about what a woman has to navigate, about where she finds support and where there is none, and about the institutions that protect and nurture bad behavior by men.

—Sean Carswell | *Black Swan Rising*

on the Lower East Side, who discovers his former love, Vicki, is back in the city. He looks for a possibility to connect with her, but first he has to find her.

Throughout one long night, Sam and his friend Francis seek out Vicki at gay bars, nightclubs, and dominatrix joints throughout Manhattan, but keep coming up short. Along the way they're fueled by alcohol and drugs, pizza, and brawling. There are lots of music (and punk) references, whether it's to Black Flag or the Yeah Yeah Yeahs.

The reason I'm a sucker for books about NYC is because I believe in it as a city of possibilities. You can watch your favorite musician play at a dive bar, get hit on by a bartender, see someone step in vomit on the subway, and fall in love. And *131 Different Things* definitely displays the sentiment that anything is possible. With every bar that Sam and Francis go to, something unexpected occurs.

Interspersed throughout the book are color photos taken by Nick Zinner of Yeah Yeah Yeahs. They accent the action to some degree, but don't directly relate to it. They primarily show people in party situations or just being weird. Some pictures are of dogs, others of musicians. While I didn't think them to be necessary to the story, I did like how they broke things up. Yet, they would've been better if interspersed more through the story instead of in blocks at the end of each chapter.

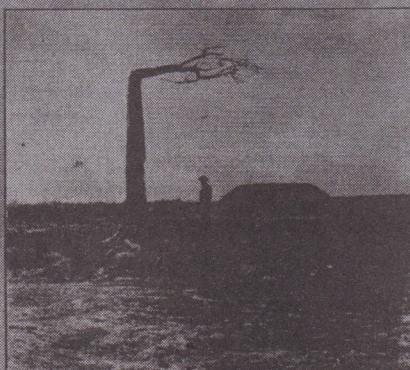
imagine ourselves—or our children—and opens fire, killing dozens of people who shouldn't die that day. We all know it's going to happen in the next year. Think about what you're going to say when it happens. Because this is important: you already know. You have already reacted to this event. Your opinion is already formed. All of our opinions are. We have our tweets ready. The NRA has drafted their next speech. Political teams on both sides of the aisle have their press releases ready. Bumper stickers have been printed. But let's say, hypothetically, that we want to live in a world where men don't mow down dozens of strangers with assault rifles. How do we have a real conversation about change?

This is the challenge that Lisa Brackmann embraces in her latest thriller, *Black Swan Rising*. The novel begins with a woman being harassed before she's even named. Sarah Price works social media for a congressional campaign. She also has a secret past. They, whoever they are, have found her. The harassment has restarted. She wonders if her past could derail her boss's reelection campaign. Meanwhile, across town, local TV reporter Casey Cheng is covering a mass shooting when she gets shot. As part of her recovery, she sets out to investigate the aftermath of mass shootings. Her investigation reveals that her shooter aligned himself with a misogynist, neo-Nazi

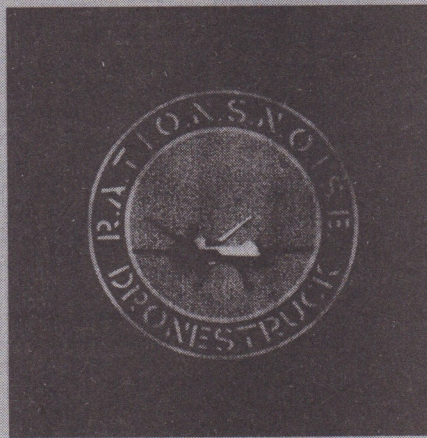


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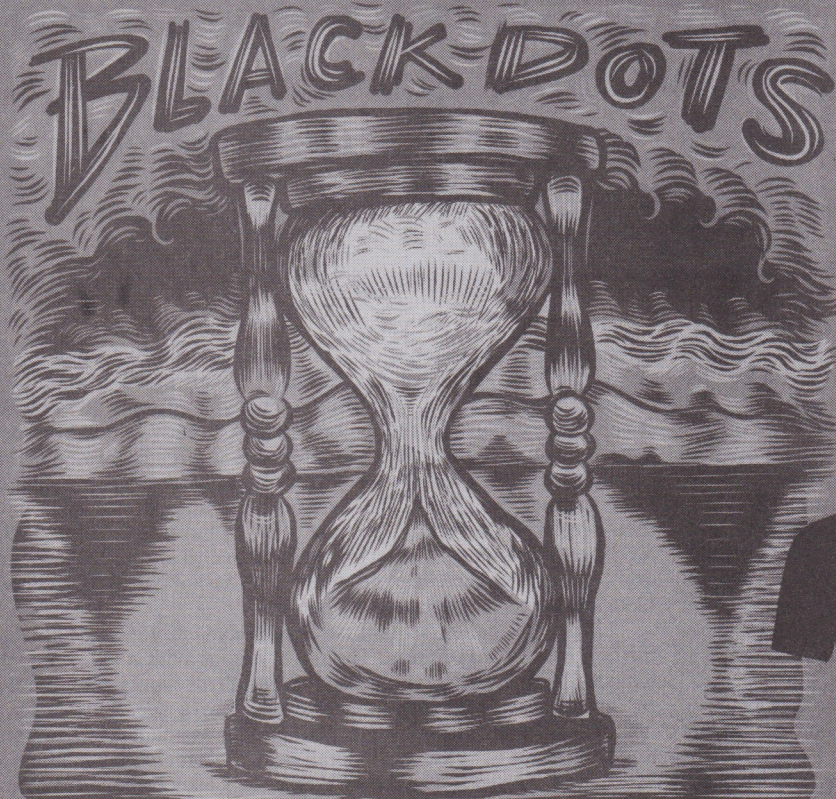
**RATIIONS NOISE** delivers a remixed collage of sonic bits taken from RATIIONS' studio, practice, and live recordings and combines them with terrifying text-to-speech exploring the effects of the US drone war from the following perspectives: Those being bombed, those doing the bombing, those trying to stop it, and those of us whose taxes pay for the bombs. Members of RATIIONS, SMALL ARMS DEALER, WAX PHANTOM.

**LP packaged** in uncoated jackets, inners, and obi, all printed both sides. **Cassettes include** full artwork housed in chipboard "bradpak".

**Mastered** by Carl Saff. **Artwork** by Wells.

**Split 12" LP:** 86'd Records, Different Kitchen (UK), Ersatz Reality (DE), Farsot Records (SE), Rad Girlfriend, Tor Johnson. **Split Cassette:** Lost Cat Records, No Time Records. **Download:** 86drec.bandcamp.com

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movement. There's every reason to believe that more shootings are on the way, and both Sarah and Casey are targets.

All of this is established in the opening pages of the novel. Brackmann sets up a difficult tightrope. Sarah and Casey could easily become mouthpieces for the author; the book could easily become preachy and dull. It could feel like one more voice shouting at us from an entrenched position. Brackmann is too skilled for that. First, she makes Sarah and Casey feel real. They're both flawed, confused, and trying to move through incredibly difficult circumstances. Sarah is not sure she has the courage to do what she needs to do. Casey may have too much courage. They both may end up dead. More to the point, you care about them staying alive. Second, even though the novel is built around a political campaign, the presumable Democrat (parties are never mentioned) is sweet and caring, but has violence issues and carries a gun. The Republican banks on racism but has a big heart. Both are at times likeable and despicable. The campaign takes a backseat to Sarah

everyday-ness of the event is also why we rarely read about it in fiction. This rarity makes it all the more striking.

However, as with other first-novelists writing ground-level novels, Darling seems to have concluded that she'd better go big with the ending. It's not bad—just out of place—but that's okay: *Fade into You* is, like life, about the journey. —Jim Woster (Feminist Press, feministpress.org)

**Quit Your Band: Musical Notes from the Japanese Underground**  
By Ian F. Martin, 242 pgs.

I'm not sure a book like this would have existed before the internet. The idea of an expansive yet personal overview of new-to-the-reader scenes allegedly forms the basis for much of today's expository scene writing—I use the word “allegedly” here because the imagined audience of such books often has at least a toe in whatever musical pool the writer discusses. In the case of the sprawling Japanese music ecosystem that Ian F. Martin discusses

**Donna Gaines has taken the lightning-fast songs of the Ramones' oeuvre and welded her own brainy spin on their songs, their personalities, their impact, resulting in something unequivocally fresh and engrossing.**

—Michael T. Fournier | *Why the Ramones Matter*

and Casey's intersecting stories. Complicated issues are raised and moral decision must be made. And there are so many guns. And always too many shootings. Through it all, the plot moves like a roller coaster. You get pinned to your seat and flung at increasing speed down a track that feels like it could throw you at any second. It's exciting. You find yourself at the end way too quickly.

The ending itself is a surprise and a risk, but, for me, totally satisfying. It leaves me realizing that I lost myself in the book, but once I was done, I couldn't help meditating on this culture of toxic masculinity we're living in. I feel like I learned something about what a woman has to navigate, about where she finds support and where there is none, and about the institutions that protect and nurture bad behavior by men. I feel a little more ready to have a conversation that's deeper than two sides shouting at each other across a battlefield. —Sean Carswell (Midnight Ink)

**Fade into You**

By Nikki Darling, 186 pgs

*Fade into You* is a novel about an L.A. girl attending an arts high school in the '90s, but it's not set in L.A.'s fabled Westside, it's set in the San Gabriel Valley. In American literature, the SGV is most prominent for being the place where James Ellroy's mother was murdered in 1958—from Ellroy's *My Dark Places*: “The region defined the crime. The region was the crime....”

In Nikki Darling's slice of life, however, the SGV is a pleasant place for kids to ramble around and be nervous and petulant and not be notably adventurous. Had I not been reading it to meet a deadline, I would have placed it on the (figurative) nightstand and dipped in and out of it, as though it were the narrator's diary. (The narrator's name is Nikki Darling, but Darling the writer says in the acknowledgments that it's a novel.)

When an everyday tragedy, surprising and inevitable, falls on the narrator just before the end of the novel, it hurt this reader to read about it; a power that I wouldn't have felt without the novel's drifter's pace. As an adult, I know this kind of tragedy won't go onto define the narrator, but the narrator can't know that. The

in *Quit Your Band*, though, the author knows that readers are unlikely to have much acquaintance with the groups and scenes he mentions, to say nothing of the intricacies of booking shows in Japan. This lack of acquaintance is one of the points he makes: the best way to immerse oneself in any new 'scape is to find a band and start chasing down tendrils: ex-members, aligned groups.

If this method sounds familiar, it might be a product of your age, dear reader: we used to do it like this (excuse me for a second while I yell at a cloud. Okay, I'm back now). I think a lot of aging punks who are detached from active music hives feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of options that are out there, and as such resort to the hackneyed assertion that there's no good music being made—even though the number of options and avenues that have yielded the exact opposite of that assertion. Because the history of recorded music is available to everyone, it's now easier than ever for microscenes to spring up. It takes a little more work to find them, but it's work that's fun. Or should be, anyway.

Ian F. Martin's book is more than a book in this age of the internet: it's easy to forget that all books are now hypertexts. Reading about the bands he discusses in a vacuum is one way to approach this book. It's much more gratifying, though, to use it as a springboard for discovery. Martin carefully and lovingly details specific, sometimes tiny epochs of Japanese underground music, which are accessible with a little digging. And if you're a “Back in the Day” kind of person, you'll remember how immensely gratifying such archeological discoveries could be. If not, now's a great time to start. —Michael T. Fournier (Awai Books, 1133 Broadway Suite 708, New York NY 10010)

**Tucson Salvage: Tales and Recollections from La Frontera**

By Brian Jabbas Smith, 332 pgs.

Brian Jabbas Smith is a recovering meth addict who played in a bunch of bands. He's also a reporter for the *Tucson Weekly*. *Tucson Salvage* is a collection of his columns from that free weekly, focusing on residents of that city who don't often get much time or coverage: a legless dialysis patient, the operator of a late night hot



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Sleeper Hits:  
Sordid Youth  
Vol. 1

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dog stand, a young woman paralyzed in an auto accident who then put herself through law school, dozens of others.

Smith's writing in *Tucson Salvage* is a delicate balance of reporting and pathos, never going too far in either direction. He's interested in his subjects, spends time with them, becomes involved in their lives—sometimes uncomfortably as his addiction threatens to rear up. He feels kinship with the underrepresented because of his own subterranean travels. As such, he never casts judgment, despite his affection for the subjects of these many standalone essays being at the fore. A few steps in a different direction and he might have been in the same spot.

Due to the confines of newspaper column work, economy is necessary, as is innovation: readers won't return to repetition. His prose throughout is crisp, occasionally dazzling, and never self-congratulatory. Smith's eye for defining details translates easily into description which catches personality and setting with a few deft words. Subjects as disparate as custom bike frame designers,

This is the second entry in University of Texas Press's "Music Matters" series, a collection of small-ish books devoted to single bands. If this one is any indication, I'm sure the rest of the series are bangers (yes, even the Karen Carpenter volume). Here, Donna Gaines has taken the lightning-fast songs of the Ramones' oeuvre and welded her own brainy spin on their songs, their personalities, their impact, resulting in something unequivocally fresh and engrossing. Even the biggest fans will find something new to enjoy here. —Michael T. Fournier (University of Texas Press, [utpress.utexas.edu](http://utpress.utexas.edu))

#### **xXx Fanzine: Hardcore & Punk in the Eighties**

By Mike Gitter, 288 pgs

Until now, I knew Mike Gitter only by reputation—during the punk rock feeding frenzy of the mid-nineties his name was frequently dropped in discussions of indie bands jumping ship to majors. In particular, I remember his name being connected to

I try not to gush in reviews. It's hard not to gush about the ridiculous wealth of knowledge and history in xXx. And absolute joy, start to finish, and essential.

Michael T. Fournier | *xXx Fanzine: Hardcore & Punk in the Eighties*

long distance couples trucking, and rug weavers are instantly familiar once described.

One of the joys of being a book critic is the arrival of a completely unheralded release which delights. I have no idea how *Tucson Salvage* found its way to my door, but I'm glad it did. —Michael T. Fournier (Eyewear Publishing, [eyewearpublishing.com](http://eyewearpublishing.com))

#### **Why the Ramones Matter**

By Donna Gaines, 138 pgs.

I'm not a Ramones scholar (looking at you, Dale) but I've read a fair number of books on the band, have watched documentaries, and, of course, have listened to all the records. Despite my admiration for the band and their work, I know there's a saturation point with the Ramones—like the Sex Pistols and The Clash and so many of punk's progenitors—buckets of ink have been spilled in critical appraisal of the quartet and their work. Coming in to this one, I wondered what might be left to say.

Author Donna Gaines addresses this, saying "(a)nyone reading a book on why the Ramones' music matters already knows the answer and would probably rather spit up than discuss it." From there, this head-spinning volume doesn't discuss so much as it considers. After a chapter placing the band in the context of the '70s, diametrically opposed to the prevalent FM radio dinosaurs, Gaines uses a number of broad topics/chapters to riff on the band. She understands that in discussing the Ramones, form must follow function: can you imagine the betrayal of a long-winded Ramones book? Neither can she. Salient points whiz by, buttressed by heady theoretical touchstones like Adorno and Sartre.

Take the chapter titled PAF, which initially appears to be a discussion about how the band are Punk As Fuck. In this segment, she jumps from anomie ("the condition of normlessness") to punk as a response to post-World War II norm culture to the identities inherent in Judaism to trauma to individualism to DIY culture. Phew! It sounds like a lot—it sounds laborious—but Gaines has the uncanny ability to weave these disparate short threads together into a greater piece of work. The buzzsaw pace of her ideas, like songs on Ramones albums, demand that you dive back in and check again.

Jawbox's defection from Dischord to Atlantic. Gitter's xXx fanzine was always mentioned as a credential, but I was too little to have read it when it came out. So, when Bridge Nine released this compendium of the zine's five year run, I was curious to dive in.

Well, holy shit. This one is right up there with the reissues of *Touch and Go*, *Sub Pop*, and *We Got Power* zines. xXx is absolutely essential, and should be in every fledgling punk historian's library. The oversized format of the book—each page is roughly a foot square—allows for clean reprints of all the original zine pages, with room for commentary from Gitter and his interviewees on the side, providing a nice then-and-now contrast. It's cool to see the original ads reproduced, too.

Gitter's hometown of Boston is certainly represented here. Scene gossip is a staple of each of the zine's twenty issues, and interviews with the likes of SSD, DYS, Slapshot, and Gang Green, among others, are prominent. And I get that people outside of New England (hell, even people in it) might have Boston fatigue. With that said, Gitter's coverage of bands extends beyond Beantown: his writing focuses on a diverse, awesome group of bands including the Misfits and Necros, Black Flag, Ignition and Dag Nasty, Swans, even early Metallica and Voivod. Gitter interviews bands that he likes, and his taste is spot-on. There are no clunkers here.

I try not to gush in reviews. It's hard not to gush about the ridiculous wealth of knowledge and history in xXx. And absolute joy, start to finish, and essential. (Hey publishers: how about a similar treatment for *Suburban Voice* and/or *Forced Exposure*? Ah jeez, I think my Boston is showing. Sorry.) —Michael T. Fournier (Bridge Nine, [bridge9.com](http://bridge9.com))





### Records Collecting Dust II: DVD

The first installment of this two-film (at least so far) series was largely centered on the West Coast, with a gaggle of punker icons from that side of the country sharing their record collections and ruminating about their first purchases, specific items they think are particularly significant/favorites, and so on. This time 'round the filmmakers head to the other coast to enter into similar conversations with scene luminaries Al Quint, Cynthia Connelly, and Mike Gitter, as well as members of Agnostic Front, Cro-Mags, Dag Nasty, Fire Party, FUs, Gorilla Biscuits, Government Issue, Helmet, Iron Cross, Jawbox, Jerry's Kids, Minor Threat, Mission Of Burma, Moving Targets, Prong, Scream, Sheer Terror, Shudder To Think, Slapshot, SOA, Swiz, The Freeze, and Underdog.

As with the previous installment, the results are surprisingly engaging, focusing on the role of music on some of American punk's heaviest hitters as *fans* rather than musicians. The discussions come off

as sincere, intelligent, and more about inspiration—some of which are pretty surprising considering the bands repped here—rather than “look at this cool fuckin’ record I got that you *wish* you had, losers.” It’s no easy feat to string a series of talking heads waxing poetic in a visual art form about an aural art form, but they pull it off well here, resulting in a film that’s interesting and thoughtful. —Jimmy Alvarado (MVD Visual, [mvdvisual.com](http://mvdvisual.com))

### Us Festival, The: 1982 The Us Generation: DVD

In 1982, Steve “The Woz” Wozniak was flush with cash following the success of the computer company he co-founded, Apple. Looking to festivals past and wanting to inspire a more community- and tech-oriented generation stressing a sense of “us” rather than the “me” generation he saw in the 1970s, he decided to spend some of his cash on a festival of his own held at Glen Helen Regional Park (now Glen Helen Amphitheater) in San Bernardino, Calif. over Labor Day weekend, 1982.

Split into themed “days” focusing on new wave, rock, and more eclectic fare, gracing the stage were many of the era’s top acts—Ramones, Talking Heads, Gang Of Four, The B-52’s, The Police, Tom Petty, Pat Benatar, The Cars, Eddie Money, Jackson Browne, Fleetwood Mac, and so on—spread out over the three-day weekend, playing for several hundred thousand attendees. Despite triple-digit weather, more than a hundred arrests, several drug overdoses and reported twelve million dollars in losses, Woz threw another, even bigger festival the next year.

Documenting the first Us Festival, this film is largely skint on actual performances by most of the bands—you get a full song from the odd band and brief snippets of footage from many others—and flush with talking head testimonials from the guys who pulled it off yakking about the challenges of mounting a large-scale event and about the genius that is Steve Wozniak for wanting to do so in the first place. Nowhere near as engrossing or culturally significant as the documentaries *Woodstock* or *Gimme Shelter*, the results are oddly focused more on one man and the small group of people he employed to make his dream come true, rather than the collective “us” in the name of the festival they created. —Jimmy Alvarado (MVD Visual, [mvdvisual.com](http://mvdvisual.com))



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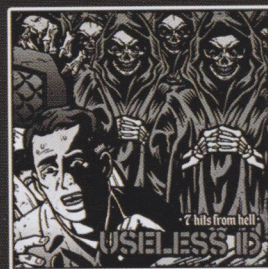
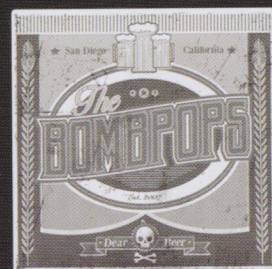
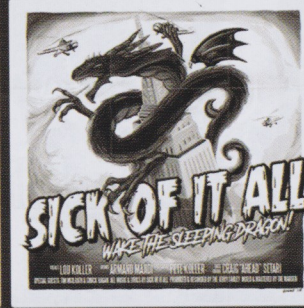
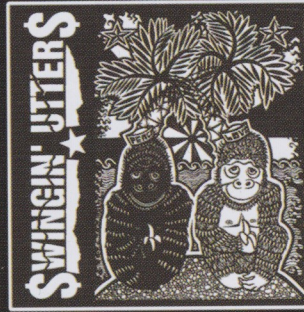
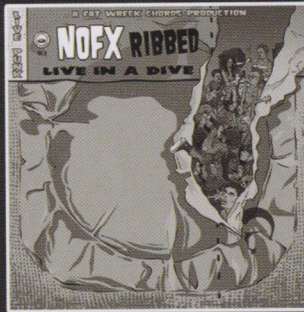
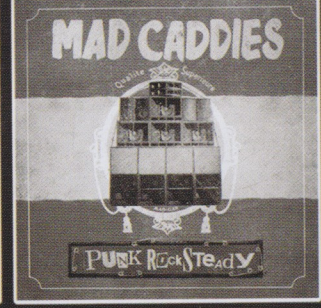
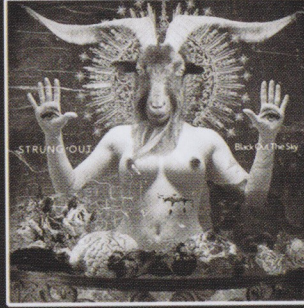
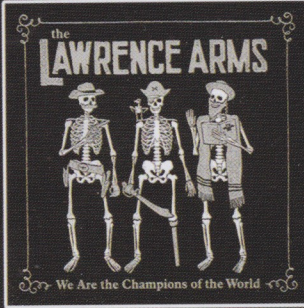
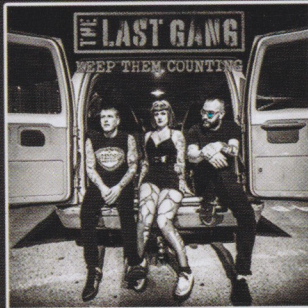


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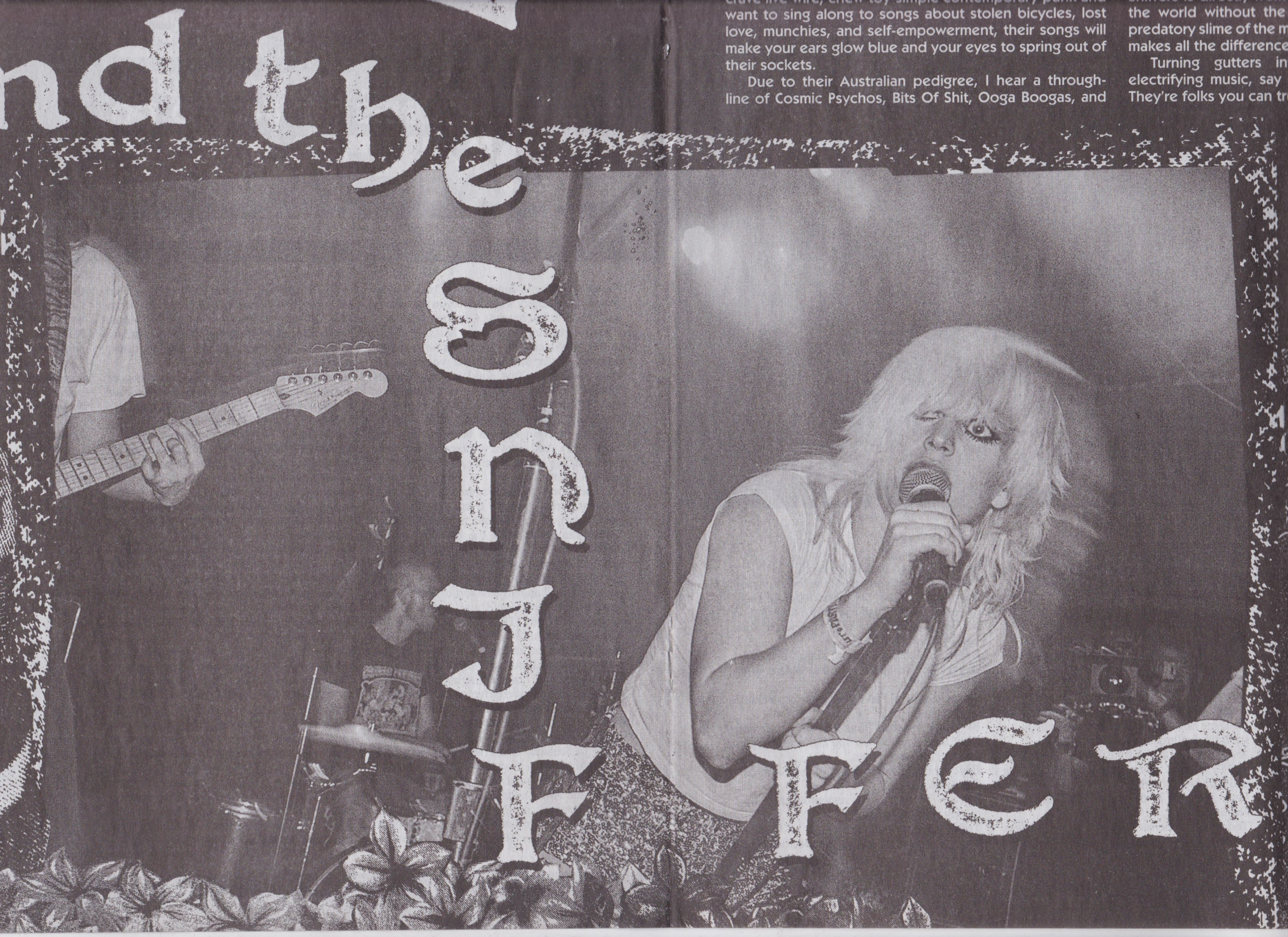
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